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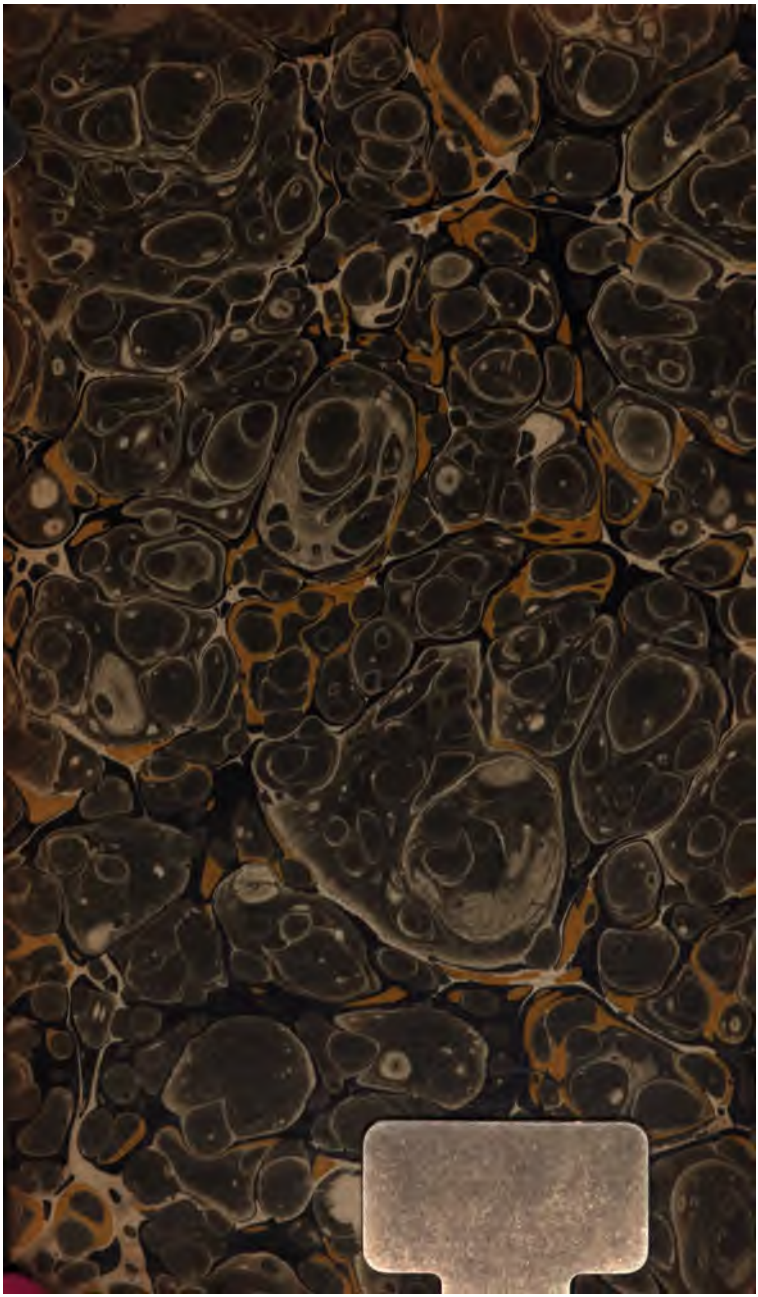

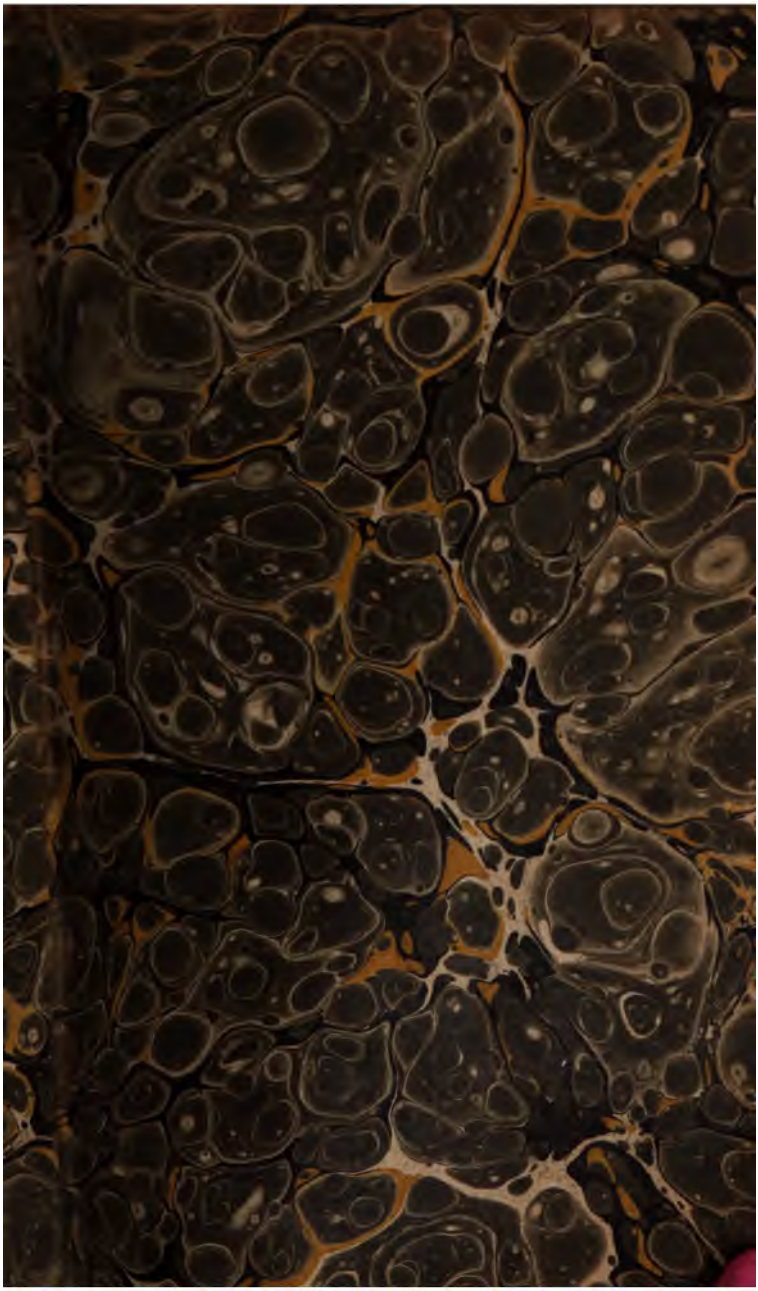

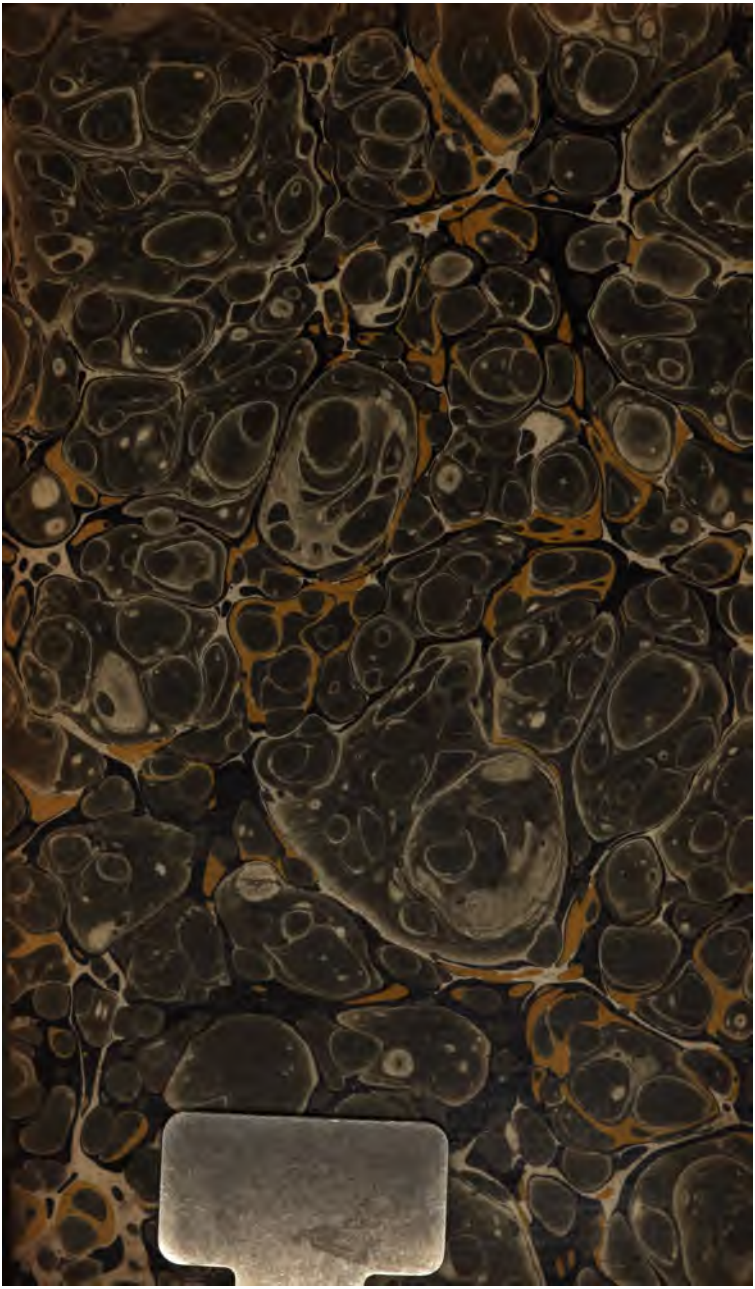

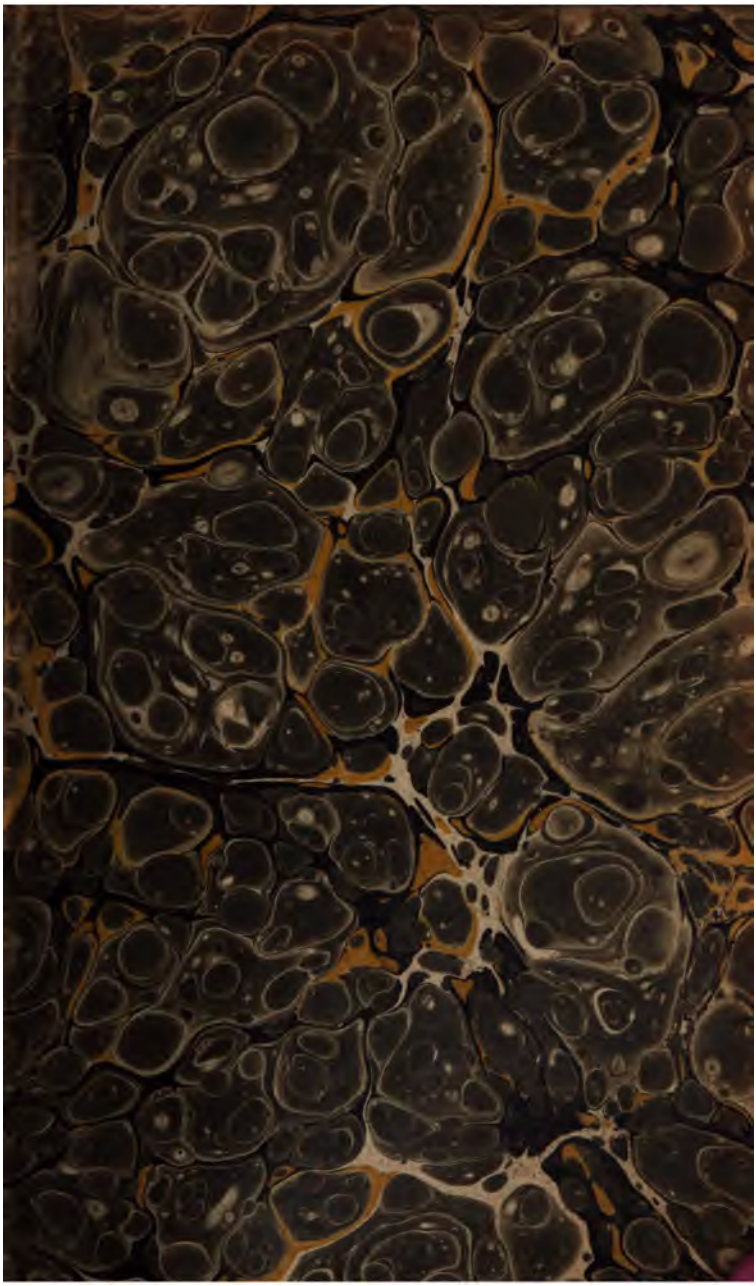

# ROSABELLA:

OR,

# A MOTHER'S MARRIAGE.

A NOVEL.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

THE ROMANCE OF THE PYRENEES;
SANTO SEBASTIANO, OR, THE YOUNG PROTECTOR;
THE FOREST OF MONTALBANO; AND
ADELAIDE, OR, THE COUNTERCHARM.

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# ROSABELLA.

## CHAPTER I.

It was in such a night as treason might conceive formed for its sanguinary projects, that many deluded individuals of a maritime province in Ireland stole from their straw-roofed cabins, and in the gloom of impenetrable darkness descended with cautious steps the craggy rocks to the seashore; there to meet the subtle agents of sedition, who had, with all the wiles of interested management, too successfully sown the noxious seeds of disaffection in the bosoms of the credulous, the ignorant, the idle, and the bigoted; leading them hoodwinked not only from their allegiance to the existing government, but into the com-

mission of crimes hostile to their eternal welfare.

These able missionaries taking every advantage of those arguments, which were yielded by the injudicious absence of landholders, to aid their specious powers of misleading, were already in waiting to administer oaths, tending to raise once more the black flag of rebellion; and to urge on their infatuated adherents, to imbrue their hands in the innocent blood of many, whom they wished to immolate through private pique or individual intrigue.

Punctual to the summons of wary treason, its secret host assembled round its standard; and more fully to organize their meditated assassination of the Earl of Montalbert, and all who should sleep beneath his roof at the moment of this intended massacre, with that of the venerable dowager Countess Derville and her family, were the motives of this night's muster. The sanguinary roll was called in the voice of cautious whisper, and responded to by all but Murphy M'Guire.

The failure of this response awakened a

sensation of painful dismay through the breasts of this band of misleading miscreants, and their credulous followers. Treason against traitors was apprehended: since Terry, the son of M'Guire, had been reared in the mansion of Lady Derville, and his attachment to his lady, and fidelity to the existing government, had been found on their subtle sounding to be invincible; and now it was feared the parental spark, teaching the father to recoil from the murder of his child, was leading him to betray all, and blow them up in the mines they were laying for the destruction of others.

To treason the extension of guilt was easy; and the policy of these delegates of mischief suggested the expediency of the immediate assassination of M'Guire and his family, in their sequestered cabin; and at the command of cruelty, and upon the mere suspicion of disaffection, the selected bravoes were filing off, without one impeding pang of compunction, to deprive that being of life, with whom, but the preceding night, they had solemnly sworn the bonds of confederacy; when, by the po-

tent shock of alarm, they were suddenly arrested in their path to crime by a man, who presented an intrepid front to intercept their progress, and who in the voice of undaunted courage ordered them to halt.

"Murphy M'Guire," said this interposing stranger, "is prevented by illness from attending your rendezvous: and you, father Delany, whose voice has informed me you are here giving your benediction to projects most incompatible with the function you profess, have been sought for far and near, to receive the confessions of a man, whose life appears to be now called for by the Great Leveller of all; therefore, in his case, the bullet of assassination need not seek its billet."

The voice of this intrepid stranger struck like an avenging arrow from heaven upon the hearts of all, and withheld the numerous hands raised to inflict the death blow of this rash intruder; and, in the combined tones of astonishment and dismay, from one to the other was resounded—

"Lord Montalbert!"

"Yes," replied this intrepid noble, "Lord Montalbert, whom I have just heard you bind yourselves to murder as he slept; but who now stands before you, although widely awake, to recommend his soul to the mercy of Heaven—yet wholly in your power; and who, ere his bosom receives your fatal weapon, implores, that if his death is inevitable by your hands, his life may appease you; and that his unoffending household may not be sacrificed to the vengeance, which, he concludes, must have been awakened solely by himself."

A pike was instantly raised in menace at him, which even his heroic courage could not have turned from its sanguinary purpose, when a genuine Irishman, influenced by native generosity of spirit, and charmed by courage in its undaunted form, stepped forth to advise—"Ere they should destroy a man who had so unhesitatingly intrusted himself to their mercy, to demand, whether chance or design had brought his lordship thither, to become a spy upon their meeting?"

A few words of conciliating tendency from father Delany caused this proposition to be acceded to; and his lordship replied to their interrogations:

"Accident solely brought me here to discover enemies, where I believed I had merited only friends. Those who know the present habits of my life know full well, that lonely walks for solitary contemplation are amongst them. To indulge in this propensity, I sallied forth about two hours since; and in seeking my favourite haunt, the seashore, I passed the cabin of M'Guire, but into which I was led by the resistless voice of sorrow. I found the poor man dying, and all around in lamentations; whilst, to make his confession, he piteously implored, but his pastor was no where to be found. I, amongst many, went to seek the truant father; and, when told that he had been last seen ascending these rocks, I climbed them, and here descended; when, from beholding so many in secret assembly, I feared I had unwarily entered the circle of banditti. I therefore concealed myself, until with security I

might effect my retreat, when I discovered more to appal me than the projects of a horde of robbers; but when I found a band was rushing forth to massacre a dying man and his defenceless wife and children, pitying humanity vanquished the prudence of self-preservation; and, in the wild temerity of impulse, I presented myself before you, to accelerate that death, which I am unconscious how I can have deserved from you."

Many voices now broke forth in the murmurs they had been taught to utter against this young noble.

"Have you not," they cried, "been fighting like a lion the cause of oppression, and shedding the blood of our best friends the French, who have promised to free us from our yoke of subjection, and yield us the liberty, and wealth, and happiness, they have secured for themselves? And now you are come back to us, which sorrow one of you would have done, had your health longer permitted you to be murdering our friends for us; what has yourself done, but by giving yourself up to solitude,

debarred us of the advantages which the open house of your ancestors, filled with guests from all parts flocking to the board of old Irish hospitality, used to afford us by the broken victuals, and the expenditure of money amongst us?"

"This is no time for attempting to combat those erroneously imbibed political opinions, which form your first charge against me," his lordship answered; "but to the second, let me ask, if my gates are barred against the gay, are they closed against the indigent, or the afflicted? If sorrow has blighted my relish for gay scenes; if griefs, which unfit me for society, lead me in coveted solitude to shun the world, who can say my ears are closed against the claims of humanity, or my heart callous to the distresses of my fellow-beings? Which of you ever applied to me in the moment of distress, or to my agent in my absence, without promptly finding every relief that ample means, and a sympathizing bosom, could yield you?—What industrious tenant have I ever pressed for rent? What honest individual amongst

you, requiring my assistance, but has received it? From whom have I withheld my advice, my purse, or my protection, who merited them? And, if with the sincerity of truth you answer me these questions, which I ask not through boast, but from necessity—consult your hearts then, and reply to another obvious one: Why is Lord Montalbert to be murdered?

"Is it to establish my presumptive heir in my place? A man who squanders, in the haunts of the profligate, more than integrity can sanction, or humanity approve? for his expenditure far outstrips his means, and his ill-fated tenantry are crushed to the earth, to feed his licentious prodigality.

"Will this man, think you, my poor deluded countrymen, prove a kinder landlord than your present one? Will he, do you imagine, withdraw from his long favoured haunts in the metropolis of the sister kingdom, to come hither to supply your wants, to soothe your cares, and to prove a better friend than his predecessor has been to you?"

The long uplifted pike was now dashed to the ground, and a lowly murmur of awakening conviction of error moved the lips of all, but the sanguinary agents of sedition.

Father Delany was—but the plan of our present narrative permits not our yet disclosing what he exactly was; therefore, it must suffice to say what he was not. The Catholic faith was not polluted by such a member, since religion he had none; for he was a confirmed atheist, who had no scruple to the sacrilegious assumption of the garb of priesthood, or to the hypocrisy of entering upon the performance of its sacred function, as the pastor of a deluded flock, that from his knowledge of various languages, acquired in a life of adventure abroad, combined with his beguiling powers of oratory, had induced a belief of his being a Solomon, as well as a saint; and in worldly wisdom he was indeed profound, since all his plans, and all his wishes, centred in his own temporal advantages.

Now discovered by his lordship, as forming one of this sanguinary league, the un-

hallowed traitor promptly resolved to interpose for the preservation of lord Montalbert's life, because he conceived he might obtain a rich reward for his interference; and should he not succeed in his subsequent aim of making this young peer believe, he had merely affected coöperation in this conspiracy for the purpose of developing the depth of the plot, to subvert it; why, then, Lord Montalbert's death still would be in the power of his decree.

In conformity with this hastily formed project, this impostor priest plausibly pleaded for the life of Lord Montalbert; pleading which had become wholly unnecessary, since his lordship's own appeal had expunged the sanguinary fiat for his doom from the page of pitiless assassination.

But, although such was the effect of the fascination of his lordship's manner, and his utterance of obvious truths, yet the expediency of exacting an oral bond of secrecy from him upon the discovery he had made was just beginning to strike

upon the prudence of the wary, when lord Montalbert, as eager to save other lives, as he had rashly been that of Murphy M'Guire, entreated to be informed, "what could influence their determination for the destruction of the Ravenswood family?"

"*Kease* *, my lord," replied one of the conspirators, "it is too ould, or too indolent, my Lady Derville is growing, to be shuperintinding the management of the property; so all is left, your honor, to the clapper claws of that scourge to the poor Irish tinantry—a *marvel* † hearted agent, who has got the length of her fut so completely, though 'tis not so much as her brogue-maker, she would be appointing the very best workman amongst us; not so much as a mason, nor carpenter, nor thatcher, nor one of us; so all is left to his guidance, and more grief to us! for, sure your honor, it is wid the grinding machine of oppression, and the iron mallet of tyranny, he does that same; whilst the Turk of a chaplain, and success to him!

* Because. † Marble.

who lives on the fat of the land we fertilize by the sweat of our brow, is never the dispinser, either as proxy or principal, of that charity, he preaches to his flock: whilst, from the young lord's coming to the years of discrition, sorrow morsel of hope can gasp out of that same! for won't our *farrums** be out of lase then, and wont he be setting them for higher rints; for who that knows him, but knows 'tis a *negur*† he is; and, as to pity—och, murder!—'tis as big a stranger to his heart, as plinty is to my roof.

"Nor," continued this man with increasing vehemence, "have ourselves much better to be expecting from the young spawn of the family; for Master Charless is the grand sultan of pride, and would sooner break the back of him, nor bend it in courtesy to an inferior, whilst my Lady Meliora, afeard the eye of poverty would be blighting her beauty, if it gazed upon her, never goes abroad, but

* Farms. † Niggard.

wid her green curtain * to skreen her; and even then gallops for the bare life by our cabins, as if she feared the smoke of a poor man's chimney would be tarnishing her complexion, or exhale, as it curled towards her, the black contagion of his poverty."

"But these are not the only individuals who inhabit Ravenswood," said Lord Montalbert.

"O," exclaimed the man, who had first interposed in his lordship's behalf," then it is Miss Rosy your honor manes to remind us of, as something worth saving.—But more grief to the most desperate patriot of us all, if we would be murdering her, bekease it is an angel herself is, and the little cherubim, her kin, would not be letting us.—Ah, then, success to her! for though it is like a trembling bird herself is, afeard of every leaf that moves, the creathur still ventures amongst us, whin it is good she can be doing; and, though it was the

* Veil.

blint side of her fortune had the heart to be turning to the jewel, it would be to the big amaze of your honor, to be knowing all the cute contrivances herself makes, to comfort the sick and ———"

The further eulogium of this tool of villanous machinations—who, possessing a heart of sensibility, alive to every impression of kindness, or its reverse, was but the more readily led away by the wiles of his assailants—was suspended by the well known signal, made from a certain point by one of the confederates, who had been at the post town, awaiting some anxiously expected instructions from their leaders, and who now, half breathless with dismay, appeared, to announce to this assembly—"That the allies had entered Paris!—That Bonneparte had abdicated the French throne!!"

By the mail from Dublin only arriving three times each week at ——, added to delay in the intelligence of the victors being at the gates of Paris, until closely followed by the confirmation of their possessing it; this horde of conspirators knew

nothing of the threatened overthrow of their faction, until the mighty blow was struck; and now, all aghast at the information, and while the disappointed confederates stood in dismay, mourning over the annihilation of those delusive promises of succour and protection, Lord Montalbert was suffered, unmolested, to depart for his home,—there to return his fervent thanks to Heaven for his escape from assassination, and to receive those packets, which contained intelligence for him of those glorious events, which the Supreme Disposer of mercies had ordained.

When fully convinced, on the following day, that the power was subdued, which had fed their spirit of revolt, numbers of the misguided conspirators threw themselves at the feet of Lord Montalbert, with candour and contrition, to confess their meditated transgressions;—but the wily impostor Delany importuned for the honor of a private audience, when he subtly strove to light the lamp of gratitude in his lordship's breast, for the preservation of his life through his influence; and then

insinuating, " that, a suspicion of the true cause of his having appeared to coöperate in the conspiracy by some means being introduced into the minds of his parochial flock," he added, " he feared it was no longer compatible with his personal safety, to remain amongst them; and, therefore, it had become his most judicious policy, could he acquire the means to defray the expenses of flight, to repair to the continent; where, independent of personal security, he had a resistless impellent to migrate;" and in the policy of his arts, he allowed its source to appear to the astonished Lord Montalbert just sufficiently to lure him into the toils he had prepared.

Lord Montalbert, fully convinced how judicious would be the policy of banishing so foul a stain upon a sacred profession, would have affected to credit all he wished him to believe as his excuse for flight; and would have aided him in every way to effect so desirable an event, even had Delany's departure for the continent been uninfluenced by any other motive;—but

the last bait his arts presented made that flight appear essential for the restoration of his lordship's own individual happiness; and therefore, Lord Montalbert, it could scarcely be doubted, supplied every requisite for a prompt and safe migration, which took place that very night; and his sacrilegious assumption of the sacred profession of parish priest was fortunately supplied by a man, possessing, in an eminent degree, every virtue in which the unhallowed Delany was deficient.

## CHAPTER II.

THE account given by the confederates, of Lady Derville and family was scarcely hyperbolical, although uttered by prejudice, influenced by resentment, and inflamed by the missionaries of sedition; since her ladyship had allowed a consitutional indolence of mind and frame to increase by a life of inactivity, until it had acquired such resistless power over her, that she consigned the dominion of her grandson's tenantry to a pitiless agent, who, as the conspirators expressed it, ruled them with the grinding machine of oppression; whilst, from weak maternal apprehension, and erring judgment, she almost imprisoned her grandchildren within the circumscription of the domain of Ravenswood, Lord Derville's principal seat; and there engendered, and cherished, in their susceptible minds, foibles and propensities, which a judicious intercourse with

society would, most probably, have counteracted,

But, as some extenuation of this seclusion of her wards, we have to state, that Lady Derville's only child had all his natural virtues obscured, or blighted, by the unrestrained indulgence of his infatuated parents; and the errors and concomitant miseries of her son's life led this conscience-stricken mother to the adoption of a diametrically opposite principle, in rearing his orphan children, when bequeathed to her care; and, by confining them under her own protecting wing, as long as minority yielded her jurisdiction over them, she firmly trusted, she should pen up every human virtue within their bosoms.

But education was a necessary, that could not be dispensed with; yet to imperil them at schools, would militate against her intended system of conservation; a private tutor was therefore her alternative, and one, not only of profound erudition, but of the most rigid morals, she employed a learned friend to seek out for her; and the Reverend Thornby Sternham was se-

lected for the task of educating Lord Derville and his brother, and to yield to Lady Meliora Monson the instruction suited to her sex.

The classic knowledge of Mr. Sternham was fully competent to the task he had undertaken with a view of ultimately obtaining a mitre for his services, of which he considered the rectory of Ravenswood a promising earnest; but the rigidity of his moral precepts was of that cast, more calculated to fright away a love of virtue, by the gloomy, uncharitable, cold-hearted, and selfish doctrines, he inculcated, than to plant it, with all its native loveliness, in the bosoms of his pupils. Whilst in his religious professions he was austere, and apparently but just escaping fanaticism; he affirmed the Catholic persuasion to be his abhorrence, and every member of it his abomination; and continually uttering his opinion before the attending domestics, and writing philippics against bigotry, &c.; and publishing and circulating these opinions in cheap pamphlets, and establishing himself as a fame-stamped author, with

his name prefixed to all, awakened enmity to him in the bosom of almost every Catholic in the province, and not a little aided in arousing that sanguinary spirit, which had nearly proved fatal to the family of Ravenswood.

Lord Derville, at the period of this meditated massacre, had not long completed his twentieth year. His abilities for acquiring knowledge were of far from a contemptible order; but the stern inattractive method of his preceptor, to dogmatise him into a scholar, taught him more of abhorrence to learning, than of its lore; and, with that thirst he once had felt for literature, slaked by the chilling cup of austerity, the passions of his bosom became the study for his pursuits, and soon the most prominent one absorbed all others; and that passion, so seldom found in the breast of youth, to blight its genial blossoms of benevolence—avarice, assumed full dominion over him.

The dissipation of the late Lord Derville had considerably impoverished the estates, and embarrassed the property;

whilst the ample jointure of the dowager, and the portions of the younger children, (arranged by marriage settlements, ere this prodigality had diminished the sources of the family wealth,) bore heavily upon the young heir; which his agent, Mr. O'Lurcher, perpetually sounding in his attentive ear, it made an early and deep impression; while his grandmother's maternal apprehensions of the fascinating charms of her portionless *protegée*, leading her for ever to descant "upon the miseries of state and poverty combined; with the absolute necessity, his lordship was under, of repairing the injury his father's extravagance had entailed upon him by a wealthy alliance," gave to that expediency, and the attractions of riches, still greater allurements in his mind, where rankled painfully the idea of all the deprivations he must sustain, to pay those unfairly arranged thousands to his brother and sister, who, he thought, ought in equity to bear their proportion of the burden of his father's prodigality, which was decreed to fall upon him so heavily.

Disgusted by religion and learning, through the inattractive garb they unfortunately wore to him, Lord Derville had no important or rational pursuit, and was, consequently, early cast upon the shoals of idleness and apathy. No wonder then, the inevitable effect should menace his eternal, as well as his temporal destruction; and every thought, at length, concentrating in selfish policy, awoke only to his own individual aggrandisement, from the age of seventeen, when vanity began to whisper he was the possessor of much personal attraction, as well as his brother—it became his fondly cherished project, to lure his grandmother from her sequestration in Ravenswood to London; for him there to captivate some wealthy heiress, and, through an early and splendid alliance, to insure his happiness by securing riches for him; and, from the moment of forming this project, he never ceased importuning his guardian to realise it: but firmly she negatived his entreaties; yet, whilst she did so, in the wary policy of not driving him to the desperation of rebelling,

and going there without her, she voluntarily entered into a solemn promise of visiting London with all her wards, the moment the olive branch should wave over the united kingdoms; a promise she unhesitatingly entered into, in full conviction of her life not being extended to behold the dove of peace descend upon Europe.

Charles Monson was one year his brother's junior, and far surpassed him in mental and personal attractions; but, like Lord Derville, his zest for erudition had received a fatal chill from the injudicious austerity of his preceptor: yet not, as in his brother's case, was it totally extinguished; for as the abilities of Charles were of the first order, in despite of disgust to his tutor, and invincible idleness, sufficient knowledge was almost intuitively imbibed by him, to allow his entering upon an academical career, could the permission of his guardian be obtained for that journey: but from sending him to encounter the path of danger in a college her ladyship revolted; and she detained him at Ravenswood in the most

pernicious of all vortices for an active spirit, that of idleness.

Not to become an actor on the great stage of life, was to Charles Monson misery beyond endurance: and when disappointed of the honours to be obtained by learning, the next desire of his heart became that of signalizing himself in arms; but to extract permission from his grandmother, was a process not to be accomplished, although she endeavoured to assuage the grief and indignation he evinced upon her contumacy, by the temporizing promise of allowing him to enter the army, as soon as peace should be restored to Europe; but this promise, so degrading to his martial feeling, awakened his most glowing resentment, and introduced into his hitherto social and philanthropic mind the spirit of sullen discontent.

Charles now drooped in silent, uncomplaining misery; for there was not an individual in his circle, to whom his reason would bow, or his affection lead him to bend; for as his grandmother had

blighted all his dearest wishes, his opinion of her judgment fell from its altitude, and he believed he almost hated her for her transverse system. His sister and Rosabella were nearly as much out of his favour at this moment as his guardian, from coinciding in all her opinions, merely because they were her opinions, to whom they naturally looked up as to an oracle: the sentiments of his brother were upon most points dissimilar to his own, and Mr. Sternham was his aversion.

Thus, therefore, without a competent friend to pour balm into his deeply wounded spirit, or to correct the opinions his seclusion from extended society had engendered and nourished, Charles, absorbed in his own bitter disappointment, sunk into all the gloom inspired by grief and mortification, at finding himself doomed to be an useless member of society; whilst conscious of possessing that within him, which could raise him to the summit of any honourable profession, and feeling his own insignificance as a contemptible idler in the universe, with all the humi-

liating wounds the acute susceptibility of his ardent nature inspired, he gradually imbibed the torturing belief, that he already was, and should become more so still, as years accumulated on his head, the contemned of the estimable, as a being too inert, or too pitiably ignorant, to take any part of utility in the theatre of life.

The consequence of all this mental mortification was, that the predominant failing of his mind—pride—took deeper root to arise in conscious loftiness, in anticipation to repel such unjust suspicions of his capabilities or his inherent principles; and tremblingly alive to every shadow of that contempt, which he feared must lengthen as his day of life advanced, he became ever on the watch for causes of offence; to prove his spirit in resentment, at least, was not too inert for action. But while misanthropy was thus infecting him with its baneful influence, through the humiliating persuasion that all mankind must despise him as an idle younger brother, his love for his country hourly augmented, inspired by contrition for his proving an

useless, and therefore an unworthy son. And as he grieved for his patriotic inutility, he imbibed adoration of even the very errors of his country; became envious of every other nation that could claim superiority in any excellence, and not only jealous to agony for its fame and welfare, but was unconsciously training himself into a vindictive brand, to take fire for the destruction of all who dared not to pay idolatrous worship at Hibernia's shrine.

Lady Meliora Monson, one year younger than her brother Charles, was indebted to nature not only for transcendent beauty, but for much talent, and many excellent qualities of the heart; all of which however, were at times obscured by excess of vanity, imbibed from the unqualified adulation of her own family circle; who influenced by partiality, and in their circumscription beholding nothing to surpass her in exterior, believed her nearly superhuman; whilst she, from her stationary sphere, seeing no individual who aimed at *rivalité*, naturally concluded there was

not in existence fascinations to surpass, or equal her own.

From Mr. Sternham her ladyship had learned all modern languages for female education, with as much classic information as her hatred of his austerity permitted her to acquire: but as he left her religious principles to the precepts of intuition—only at stated periods giving lectures upon the subject to his pupils, too abstruse for their comprehension, or too gloomy for their taste; and from that source obtaining no lesson upon the humility which ought to prove the soft light to show the path to Christian perfection, she had allowed her besetting sin of vanity to reign most resistlessly over these acquirements too; and having no competitor to teach her a just estimate of her abilities, she acquired an inattractive affectation even in her display of them, although her exhibitions for admiration were rarely in her power to make to more than the inmates of Ravenswood mansion.

When we say that Lady Meliora had no competitor to yield her a true esti-

mation of her own charms and acquirements, we do not mean, that Rosabella, the *protégée* of her grandmother, was disqualified from proving such; but she was not permitted to become this counteracting influence; a strong impression of inferiority in every mental and personal charm, having been implanted in her breast from even her most juvenile days, by the policy of Lady Derville, as a shield against the dreaded captivation of her grandsons. Rosabella believed it was so; and with all the happy ease of contentment in her inferiority, she grew up in full conviction, that vanity could find no excuse for shelter in her bosom; and that her only chance of obtaining admiration was, by deserving esteem. She therefore even from childhood exerted all her powers to weed her heart and mind from every tendency to error; whilst, as her excellent understanding led her to believe, should she survive her protectress, she should have to depend chiefly upon her own exertions for subsistence, she suffered no disgust from the austerities of Mr. Stern-

ham, to impede her in obtaining every information he condescended to impart; and as she was the only one of his pupils, who met his caprice or severity with patience and submission, so in time she became the only one he experienced any approach to pleasure in teaching, and he gave to her many lessons for her improvement, when his other pupils declined availing themselves of his instructions. Thus Rosabella was led to find the uses of adversity: and in reward as it seemed for such laudable industry, Providence ordained her other incalculable advantages, which we shall in the subsequence of our narrative communicate.

The showy accomplishments of Lady Meliora and Rosabella laboured under the disadvantages of being acquired only from the best instructions to be obtained at a distance from the metropolis; still however, Lady Meliora performed on the piano forte and harp with tolerable science and execution, and sung most sweetly; yet Rosabella would have exceeded her far in vocal and instrumental excellence,

had it not been for the excessive timidity of her nature, aided by the chilling absence of the cheering ray of encouragement.

Lady Meliora painted flowers, shells, and feathers, with great skill, while Rosabella had acquired a surpassing facility in sketching scenery from nature, and grouping figures from imagination; but although she could perform all this with exquisite taste and correctness, she yet could proceed no further; since her master was himself incompetent to finishing her beautiful designs into pictures.

The affectation of Lady Meliora destroyed every pleasing effect in her dancing; whilst the gracefully inartificial ease of the animated Rosabella, when, with her whole heart engaged in her employment, she measured the mazy round, must have attracted universal admiration, had she ever appeared as a votary of Terpsichore out of the family circle of Ravenswood; where from the wary management of the fearful parent, the impossibility of our

heroine's excelling in any thing was the real or pretended belief of all.

The apprehensions of Lady Derville relative to the effect of Rosabella's charms may possibly find their justification in the minds of our prudent readers, when they learn all the motives for them in the story of her hapless insulation; and may forgive, in some degree, her ladyship's apparent unkindness, in placing the perfections of this young unfortunate in such mortifying shade, when they hear how much real benevolence she had exercised towards her.

## CHAPTER III.

In about two years after the decease of her son, Lady Derville found it necessary for the health of the young heir, to visit the coast for the benefit of sea bathing; and although Ravenswood was within a mile of the sea, yet the shore there presented was too bold for her purpose. To some distance therefore from the spot she had determined should be the stationary place of her grandchildren's conservation, her ladyship found herself compelled to take them; and to the village of Myrtle's Town, about thirty miles from her home, she accordingly removed with her young charge, for a temporary residence.

Although the strand at this village presented every thing auspicious for bathing, yet in every other accommodation it was miserably deficient; and the best abode her ladyship could procure requiring some

essential repairs ere she could commence its tenant, she remained a few days at the King William's Head; the only species of inn this humble and temperate bathing place afforded.

The mistress of this little inn was, both from inclination and duty, extremely attentive to her guests; and knowing the rank of Lady Derville, her ladyship received her due share of officious assiduity.

In the frequent intrusions of Mrs. Cormack into the parlour of Lady Derville, she was accompanied by a beautiful girl, of about two years old, whom she either held carefully by the hand, or carried in her arms; and whose fascinating countenance at length powerfully attracting the young Charles and Meliora, they importuned to have her for a playmate.

"Certainly," Mrs. Cormack said, "if the child would stay with them, who was become so fond of her, she could not bear one moment's absence from her."

"She is not your own child, I imagine," said Lady Derville.

"Oeh, no, my lady," replied Mrs. Cormack, "nor in regard to that same, does myself know who ouns her; barring indeed, that to a certainty she onst had a mother, who was as beautiful as a blushing rose, only in respect to being as pale as a ghost.—Heaven preserve us! And well she might, the creathur, for wasn't herself going to be kidnapped by a yellow divil, and torn away from her oun born childer? —Och, murder my lady! what a cruel case was hers, and myself is not likely to be forgetting it; having one of the poor childer fathered upon my pour bones, who have nothing at all, at all, for myself; yet any how, 'tis half of that same the darlingt shall have, and welcome, since the * jew of Heaven never rested on a loveliar plant of promise."

The interest and curiosity of Lady Derville being now fully awakened, she entreated, if it was not a secret which must not be confided to her, to be inform-

* Dew.

ed of the particulars of the child's apparently most singular story.

"Sorrow secret in life is there in it, my lady, only myself knows not one word of the matter; and how would I, in regard to my never having set my two looking eyes upon one of the kit, before nor since, barring the babe?

"But, my lady, it was when I was at Donaghadee—when it was a rail inn myself was the mistress of, wid doors and chimneys to every room, and stables full of nags, and waiters, and stacks of turf, and poultry, and pigs, and every elegance. — Ochem! but 'tis up its all wid me now; though I would have made my fortune there, only 'twas too fond of the creathur my husband was—Heaven rest his soul!—So it was behind hand we kept sneaking every year; but then to be sure, he had the luck to die, or 'twas a jail that was gaping for him; and then I was forced to bend to my fortune, and come all the way from Donaghadee out of the black north, to this

my native place, to disparage myself by keeping an inn, that is a humbug upon one."

"Pray Mrs. Cormack, have the goodness to tell me all you *do* know, relative to the poor child," exclaimed Lady Derville, who began to apprehend she should never learn what she was all anxiety to hear.

"Yes, my lady, I am going to tell you all about the poor babe, in the little myself knows:—but indeed it was only my grief, was what interrupted me.—Well, my lady, it was in a rail inn myself was, just two months before my first husband came to his last gasp—that is, I mane he will be my first husband, if I have the luck to get a second—which indeed the fortune-teller, who cast distinies truer nor ever I heard, tould, the day of poor Cormack's bering, I will, in regard to my having two *mowls* * on my ring finger; and indeed for that matter it was *tree* †, let alone two, herself might have seen, had she lucked as cute for them as I done.

* Moles. † Three.

"Well, my lady, when I was mistress of that elegant inn in Donaghadee, five sorrowful months ago, a carriage with four foaming nags to it came flying up to our door.

"Here Thady! Pat! Bryant, says I, bawling as loud as ever I could yell; just for dacency's sake, to give the house an elegant air.

"Arrah,' cries I, 'where are yez all miching, ye rapperus yez?' The sorrow waiter had we left, my lady, but what were all packed off, by rason of our being on the rowl down the hill; only just barring lame Thady, who myself knew was gone snoring to bed wid the whiskey; and so in regard to this miscl.ance having befallen our onst elegant establishment, myself was now the only waiter upon the premises; and indeed for that matter, not another man was to be found in his sober senses, but myself, and little Sheela; for the crethur had murdered poor Cormack too; for which rason I was the one that seen most of the guests, being their constant attendant whilst they stopped.

"So, my lady, as I was a saying, out came stalking from the carriage a yellow divil, full seven feet high, if he was an inch; wid the hair of him as black as his heart; and the beard, which was let to be growing wild on his lip, curled up to his nose, for all the world like two pot-hooks; and 'twas prouder nor Lucifer he was, not thinking—cock him up!—the soil, which the blessed Saint Patrick walked upon, good enough for his stately hoofs to stalk over, gabbling gibberish to myself all the time he was alighting; which sorrow word of could I understand, until out popped something like *don*, when och! murder, my lady; the life that was in me was stagnated, and not a morsel of me but shock like the earthquake; for thinks I to myself, 'tis a dun he is telling me he is, and not a tester* have we to give him, set in case 'tis bailiffs he has wid him.

"But sorrow catchpole was there, my lady, only the *notamy*† of the biggest beauty

* Sixpence-halfpenny. † Skeleton.

myself ever seen, not more nor twinty years of age; but as white as a winding sheet; bless us! and save us! who spoke as elegant English as myself, but widout the twang, so I understud her in a minute, whin she axed could they be accommodated at our inn until the packet would sail for Portpatrick; and though pretty spoken she was, she was quite of a tremble from grief, and 'twas the biggest of tears stud in her beautiful eyes; and so I showed them into my best parlour, since sorrow better had I, in regard to having but one; and then quickly came, following the beauty out of the carriage, a tawny wench, gabbling the gibberish too, bearing this snowdrop of a darling fast asleep in her arms.

"Ah, ha!' thinks I, 'my dream is out, for this shower of orange and white lilies is the gold and silver I seen dropping on me, from the tester of the bed, in my sleep last night;' so wid that I ushered the nurse into the parlour, whin the instant ever the yellow man beheld the child, he stamped his hoofs at the nurse, and bellowed out something, which made the

beauty burst into tears, and wring the white hands of her, and the tawny, whom they call *Ann Toney, made off wid the child into the kitchen, and I after her, and all I could then make out from her was, that the yellow divil was the †Juke of Sorrow, and that's what he was, and more grief to him the Turk!—and that the child was not his, but the Lady Duchess of Sorrow's, by her first spouse; and so he hated her, the innocent, *bekease* he would be jealous of the father, that was in his *cowld* grave; and that same was a quare thing; but 'twas true, for Ann Toney, as Shela and I made out quite cute from her jargon,—that the beauty had married the yellow man for his money, for the sake of her two childer, a boy and girl; and all wint on mighty smooth, until what does he do, the inquisitor, but finds her crying over the picture, and lock of her first husband's hair; both of which he hurled out of the window, and was instantly transmogrified from a tinder doating

* Antonia. † Duke.

lover into a mad divil; and he kidnapped the boy from her, and sint him, poor babe, where she will never clap eyes on him more, the Tiger! kease it was the father's name he bore; and then all in a foam of phrenzy he set out travelling wid her, and was now going to take her to his home, in his land of Sorrow, where he would enclose her in a castle, Ann Toney said—*Och!* the Turk! of ould cast steel.

"But not another name, but the Juke of Sorrow could I get out of Mrs. Ann Toney, my lady, and as to the tree yellow imps, who attinded the carriage, I could pump nothing out of them; nor can I blame them for their secresy, in regard to their not being able to speak a word of English, at all, at all, barring 'mad—*rid*' which I interpreted quite cute, that the master was rid by madness, and dun, which for the life of me I could find no meaning for, but och! the flutters! what heart-boundings that word scared me wid!

"Well, my lady, after the big beauty cried, I'll be bail, our well full of salt tears,

and scarcely let a morsel pass her lips; the packet sailed, and they all in it; and though I could not sleep for two whole nights for dreaming of the beauty's troubles, and thinking what a warning her fate would be for me, when I became a widow, not to be marrying again; little did myself expect to see any of the kit again; but bubaboo! back marched in the self same packet they sailed for Portpatrick in, Miss Ann Toney and the child, and a fine story she made out in her gibberish:

"That the juke and duchess were more friends nor ever, in regard to his having found she had regained the picture and hair, from the street, where he had thrown them, and so in the madridden freaks of him, he had sint the girl away too, unknonst to the mother; and who she was going to place in a nunnery, in Dublin.

"But all this was a humbug, my lady, for whin myself arose next morning to waken her to go by the Belfast coach, the saygrell was flown, leaving the poor sleeping innocent behind her; and from that hour to this, no tale or tidings has

myself been able to rake up of one of them; nor a morsel regarding them could even the captain of the packet learn at Portpatrick, barring that the beauty had been carried away quite insensible in the carriage, a few hours after the child was packed off:"

"And so my lady, this was the legacy these yellow divils left me, wid only six changes for the dear babe, of the rail dandy of elegant clothes, and a purse containing twinty golden guineas; which Cormack's distresses making him spind in no time, maintaining the darlingt became a debt of honour, which, as long as the breath is in me, I'll strive to be paying."

"Then you know not even the name of the poor deserted babe," said Lady Derville.

"*Och!* than sorrow much more, my lady, as Ann Toney had picked out, quite cute, the marking on the babe's linen; but I did hear the beauty call the child 'her Rosabella,'—but myself saw another name written on the shutter of the chamber window, where the beauty lay; and as the

writing was not there before, myself is certain it was her penmanship, the creathur!—It was some very cutting words addressed to one Frederick, about falling in battle, and leaving her to such misery, that the heart of me bled at reading them, and so I scowered them clane out, which Father Bellew was mad wid me for, bekease, he said, he would have copied writing, and all exact, which might have helped the poor babe, to discover her kiff and kin."

The interest of Lady Derville for this singularly deserted child was so powerfully awakened, that she lost not a moment in writing off to Donaghadee, to this Father Bellew, whom Mrs. Cormack had pronounced an honour to his function, requesting him to offer twenty guineas reward in her name, to any one, who could yield such certain intelligence of the escape of Antonia, as could lead to a discovery of a clew to trace her by to her place of retreat; and lest in future time inquiry might be made for the child at the inn, where she had been so cruelly

deserted, to have a full direction of where to find the forsaken Rosabella left in the hands of Mrs. Cormack's successor.

Nor was our young heroine idle in toiling for her own advantage; for by her infant fascinations she so won upon the affection of Lady Derville, and so completely entwined herself around the heart of Lady Meliora (nearly one year her senior) that they could scarcely permit even her momentary absence from them; and when the time for their sojourn at Myrtle's Town approached its termination, Lady Derville found, that parting from their engaging favourite would prove so severe a pang to herself and grandaughter, that she determined not to inflict it; when promptly making arrangements with Mrs. Cormack, she carried off the little Rosabella, now with the name of Frederick added as a paternal one, to a much more attractive residence at Ravenswood; where unsought and unclaimed she remained, treated with every tender indulgence, every encouraging mark of partial affection by her benefactress, until maternal alarm, for the

effect of such a rare combination of perfections upon the heart of either of her grandsons, led her ladyship to the painful policy of throwing all the charms and acquirements of the timid Rosa into shade.

And this policy, although it wounded the susceptibility of the grateful Rosabella, in the painful apprehension of having become less worthy of the affection of her benefactress than she had once happily been, most probably had proved a shield to the heart of Charles, in whose enthusiastic nature the visions of superlatives were ever floating, and who had early determined only to wed the most beautiful, most amiable, most sensible, and most accomplished girl in the universe; and as Rosa was carefully pronounced by all the adults of Ravenswood to be far inferior to his sister in all things; and as, with the eyes of a youthful brother, he had discovered some imperfections in that sister, during their frequent disagreements for "trifles light as air," our heroine's power of charming was dissolved; while, as to Lord Derville, the attractions of Rosabella might

have been permitted to blaze in their full radiance upon him, without their thawing that heart, frozen by the chilling influence of the passion which occupied his bosom.

But still the ever-wakeful apprehensions of Lady Derville's mind, upon the subject of this possible attachment, could not be lulled by observation upon these intervening barriers for her security; because, from the indolence of her nature, she would not undergo the trouble of observing: and about the period Rosabella attained her twelfth year, an incident occurred, which aroused those apprehensions into all the tortures that could agonize the bosom of anticipating anxiety. Charles had climbed a tottering wall, at some peril to his neck, to restore a nestling to its parent, because Rosa wept on beholding its fall; and the moment this circumstance occurred, her ladyship determined to send her *protégée* from beneath her roof, for a time at least, to nip in the bud what she feared was an early blossom of growing attachment.

And nothing for Rosabella could have proved more fortunate than this determi-

nation, since it led her to a perfect knowledge of the most important pursuit of human life,—the path by which she was to pace her way to eternity; knowledge that was not disseminated at Ravenswood in a manner likely to make the touch Promethean.

Influenced by the auspicious destiny of Rosabella, Lady Derville dispatched an epistle to an old friend, whom for some years she had ceased even to correspond with; confiding all her apprehensions to her, and imploring her "to take, for the present, the charge of her charming *protégée*, since she had no grandsons to guard from her dangerous fascinations."

This friend, Lady Anne Belmont, was a spinster, whom all who knew loved and respected. Early in life, a melancholy termination to a tender attachment had devoted her days to single blessedness, and rendered her an object of such peculiar interest to one of her brothers, the Bishop of ——, that, upon the loss of his tenderly beloved wife, in the third month of their union, he invited Lady Anne to reside with

him, at the see of ——, where he chiefly lived, not more renowned for learning than for the piety and excellence of his heart; and where, under his guidance, all the rare perfections of his highly-estimated sister's mind attained surpassing excellence; and the purity of her heart's virtues, nurtured by the genial sun of precept, and the most striking example of Heaven-inspired practice, took that firm root, which no storm of life could shake, and no temptation blight.

But the retirement of Lady Anne Belmont bore no similitude to that of Lady Derville; for although she withdrew from the gay scenes of fashionable life, she yet retreated not wholly from society; for to that she lent her aid, whenever even the shadow of a duty called her forth; and although, for herself, the allurements of the world no longer possessed a charm, yet still she lived for others: and with such a disposition, the request of Lady Derville was not likely to meet a negative. Rosabella, therefore, was permitted to become an inmate of the episcopal palace at ——.

The acute and amiable Lady Anne soon developed all that her guileless young visitor was defective in, from the omissions of her education, and total seclusion from all intercourse with expanded society; and to remedy these defects became her benevolent aim and active undertaking, in which the bishop kindly volunteered to take a part.

It was not the wish or the intention of the Bishop of ——, or Lady Anne, to destroy the simplicity of Rosa's inartificial character and manners; but they feared the imbecility of judgment, the errors of discrimination, the nurture of selfish habits and false perceptions, imbibed in a pen of total seclusion; and they wished to teach her how to discern and oppose the temptations of life, to yield her pretensions to the crown of glory, prepared for those who merit it. They saw her intuitive piety had taken root in her heart, almost with miraculous inspiration, and they determined to set her in the unerring paths, that would lead her to everlasting happiness. They saw her shed tears, on beholding or hear-

ing of the sufferings of her fellow beings, yet with little idea of offering relief; and they resolved at once to introduce to her susceptible heart the delightful conviction, that even she could alleviate many ills, and instruct her how to cull and dispense the sweet-savoured balm of heavenly charity.

It was not in the romance of Impossibility, the bishop, or Lady Anne, taught the munificence of wealthy bounty to a portionless orphan: they instructed her in the attributes of benevolence suited to her probable means; and, with joy and gratitude, Rosabella learned how even she could yield comfort, and prove useful to her suffering fellow-beings.

For three years of unalloyed happiness, save the regret she experienced in separation from her Ravenswood friends, Rosa remained the interesting and hourly-improving *protégée* and pupil of Lady Anne Belmont: for although at —— no master could be obtained to improve her showy accomplishments, yet her judgment and taste were refined by the highly-informed and elegant Lady Anne; whilst her men-

tal acquisitions had been incalculable, and her manners, although still clad in their fascinating *naiveté*, had acquired a polish of peculiar grace, that attracted all who beheld her, and charmed all with whom she conversed.

These three fortunate years of golden improvement had just seen their termination, when the bishop, in one of his pedestrian rounds of benevolence, in striving to aid an aged man in driving a plough through a stony soil, burst a blood vessel from the exertion, too great for his own strength and years; and, in consequence, he became so dangerously ill, that his relatives and friends would not yield the point of his compliance with the advice of his physicians, to repair immediately to a more salubrious clime, whither Lady Anne and his lordship most anxiously wished their young favourite should accompany them: but upon application to Lady Derville for her permission, her conscientious scruples most unwillingly compelled her to pronounce a negative; since she could not think it just, or proper, to send Rosa so far

from the only place where she could ever be claimed by her kindred, as the Madeiras: a negative, which, after a few moments given to regret, was pronounced a just one.

At length the day arrived, which was to separate Rosabella from friends, whose kindness had won a large portion of the affection of her ardent heart; and whose wise and judicious instructions she felt as so important, as so invaluable, that gratitude enshrined them as the highest of her benefactors; and she grieved proportionably at this painful separation: yet, often, and often, on her sorrowful journey, she questioned her heart, to know "if it was become ungrateful to her first friends, that it could experience so much grief, whilst on her return to them." But this suspicion her heart as often indignantly repelled. However, even her lively and affectionate remembrance of all the kindness she had experienced at Ravenswood could not lull the regret she felt at returning to a home, where active benevolence and sympathetic consolation to the afflicted were not amongst the habits of the family: but

at length she found comfort for even this regret; for, in rallying her resolution to be contented and happy at Ravenswood, although there no tender encouragement smiled on her best exertions to do well, the recollection came, that she had been permitted at times to rove about, under the protection of a nursery-maid, to collect shells for Lady Meliora to copy, and herself to sketch the surrounding scenery; when, once or twice, even she, from self-privations, had found means to evince humanity to the sick; and now she cherished a fervent hope the same indulgence would be extended to her, when she might aid the children of adversity, from the parentally kind gifts of the bishop and Lady Anne; and as she had been taught by them good management in her charities, that benevolence might not too rapidly exhaust its source, or prodigality teach her injustice, she looked upon this comfort as one that would not speedily vanish; since dress of a superior kind was never required at Ravenswood, and the affection of Lady Anne had so augmented and embellished

her wardrobe, that she believed, with care and ingenuity, it might last more years than she yet had lived.

As the return of Rosabella was dreaded by Lady Derville, so her arrival filled her with dismay; for she now believed her worst apprehensions must inevitably be realized; and whilst she herself most powerfully felt the influence of her too lovely *protégée*'s improved fascinations over the heart and approbation, she yet adopted her former policy with augmented severity; and, ere a week elapsed, had the address to persuade some, and to enforce the belief, or at least the acquiescence, of others in her opinion, that our heroine was altered in every respect for the worse, during her three years absence.

## CHAPTER IV.

As the genial showers, sent from the bountiful Dispenser of every human benefit to refresh the earth's vigour after long destructive drought, are often received by unthankful man with ingratitude, as interfering with some project of promised pleasure; so the dove of Peace, descending with balmy influence upon exhausted Europe, seemed to the many, whose interests it menaced, as an unwelcome mark of Divine favour: and upon those thus led by individual feeling, no one seemed more disposed to the impiety of ingratitude to pitying Heaven than Lady Derville; for her solemn word had been pledged to her grandchildren, to take them to the metropolis of England, the moment peace should revisit Europe; and now that event, so improbable in her calculations upon her circumscribed span of life, was borne to her, not as by the gentle herald of univer-

sal joy, but as by the raven, bringing rue and cypress, and all of evil import, that could foretell the blight of her earthly projects for the heavenly welfare of her precious charge: for no sooner was this unexpected termination to the direful horrors of war known at Ravenswood, than Lord Derville demanded the prompt fulfilment of his guardian's promise; who heard him with dismay, but in silent resignation, as if submitting to the inevitable decree of ruthless Fate, to lead her wards to the regions of Perdition.

With trembling horror, Lady Derville now awaited the demand of Mr. Monson for the performance of her also inadvertent promise to him; but Charles disdained to enter the army in the moment the sword was sheathing; and now, in more indignant ire than ever with his distressed grandmother, he brooded in powerfully-increased resentment on this unexpected blight to his long-cherished project of entering the army, as soon as he should be emancipated from his guardian's leading-strings; and then, by emulous exploits of chivalrous

heroism, to make amends to his country for his long-withheld services. And for two whole hours of dignified *hauteur*, he resolutely determined to decline forming one in the excursion to England; but to retire, in conformity with her ladyship's plans and wishes, to the hermitage in the grounds; there to remain, during her absence, in innocent reclusive preservation, practising for the life of an anchoret, for which alone she had fitted him: but soon the animated delight of Lady Meliora, painting, with the brilliant pencil of youthful expectation, and with the bright colours of new-born hope, all the pleasures which awaited them in London, aroused him to a zest for those allurements she pourtrayed, and to relinquish his gloomy plans of sarcastic retaliation.

It was not like the influence of peace, that now pervaded the interior of the lately-sombre structure of Ravenswood; for all in one moment was changed to the bustle and consequent confusion of a family, arising from a stationary perch of many years to commence a flight, so ex-

tended, so momentous. And so formidable it appeared to all the old domestic machinery, grown rusty from inaction, that they implored the impetuosity of the younger part of the family, impatient to skim the long-interdicted air of novel regions, might not be attended to; but that a couple of months might in conscience be allowed them, to arrange all things leisurely and methodically: but, although this procrastination of the evil day of entering upon the great theatre of direful temptation was ably pleaded for by Lady Derville, the youthful lord would not acquiesce; since now he feared all the returning laurelled heroes would find the reward of their toils and dangers from the hand of Hymen and Plutus, and that if he made one unnecessary moment of delay, not one wealthy alliance would be reserved for him; and, therefore, threatening to set off forthwith alone, his terrified grandmother was compelled to compromise, and guaranty that their miraculous migration should commence about the middle of May.

No sooner did it transpire in the neigh-

bourhood, that the family of Ravenswood were to be liberated from their long imprisonment by the power of peace, than ten thousand projects began to actuate the speculations of many mothers, who had daughters to dispose of, and sons to mate advantageously; and the effect of these speculations was the adoption of a plan for bringing the neighbourhood together, in either one or more festive days, to celebrate the glorious events that were to yield repose to Europe; for now, since Lady Derville was about to venture her immaculates in the dangerous vortex of London dissipation, she could not, in common urbanity, refuse to allow of their joining with their respectable neighbours in the innocent and patriotic commemoration of such glories: and as even the wisdom of ages pronounced first impressions most effective, the wisdom of policy could scarcely doubt the efficacy of producing blooming damsels and handsome swains, to make those indelible impressions on the hearts of Lord Derville, his brother and sister, in their

*début* in scenes of fascinating intercourse with society.

The idea, too, of entoiling Lord Montalbert, suggested itself to all these aerial speculators; but he was a forlorn hope, and no one conceived it possible for any stratagem or plea to draw him into the circle of hilarity; as, from the moment blighted health had chased him from the field of honour on the Peninsula, to seek its restoration in his native air, he had enclosed himself in his mansion of St. Leonard's abbey, as if it was already his cemetery; shunning society, by the uniform, though ever courteous, rejection of every effort at intercourse; brooding, as it seemed, on some direful sorrow, which all ascribed to inauspicious love—inauspicious, through the shaft of death—since a man so formed for captivating, so alluring by valour, rank, and fortune, could not otherwise, they all believed, be doomed to sigh in hopelessness.

However, although forlorn was the hope of his lordship forming one in their gay

assemblage, the convention of matrons, who met for the arrangement of what they all declared "was a mere patriotic glow of gratitude, eager to evince itself by unanimous public rejoicing," pronounced it would be rudeness to omit him; and a most elegant composition, to request his lordship's joining the grateful circle of the commemorators of peace, from the ladies of his neighbourhood, signed by them in the form of a round robin, was dispatched to St. Leonard's abbey; while one of the select few, whom Lady Derville had considered it eligible to admit at Ravenswood, undertook to draw her ladyship and long-buried treasure forth, to celebrate the peace of Europe.

And the eligibility of this sanguine agent for this distinguished honour of admittance at Ravenswood arose, in some degree, from her being an extremely cheerful, amiable woman; but more from her insulation in the world, having no kindred to introduce with her, to embarrass Lady Derville's plans; she having been the only child of two only children, who were both

long since deceased; and from this solitary influence of her destiny, almost immediately after her union with a captain in the navy, he was taken prisoner, on his return from distinguishing himself in the memorable battle of Trafalgar, and had continued in France since that period; his wife prevented from joining him by the policy of remaining in Ireland, to look after the wealth of a fourth cousin of her grandfather's, in whose favour she highly stood: and this cousin, an ailing old bachelor, had, about three months before this period, realised her expectations, and rewarded her kind attention and care, by dying, and bequeathing her a clear estate of some thousands per annum. The only cloud over this welcome bequest, was the cruel decree of changing her appellation from the "elegant name of Alermont, for which she *almost* married her captain, to the barbarous one, her cousin so annoyingly chose to perpetuate, of O'Dowd."

Although Mrs. Alermont O'Dowd had no affinity to unite with the young treasures of Ravenswood, she yet had her spe-

culations too; for, under the certain expectation of an universal liberation of prisoners, she was wild to fly off to London, to dash about her cousin O'Dowd's long-hoarded wealth, under the plausible plea of being there in readiness to receive her husband; and being a perfect idolater of rank and fashion, she considered it a matter of most serious importance to accompany and belong to a party of nobility; and a party, too, that would so coalesce with another of her passions, that of insatiable thirst for amusement; since she could not doubt, as it was the *début* of the youngsters in the great metropolis, that nothing would be sought but sights and pleasures in their various rounds.

Determined upon manœuvring herself into their suite to London, Mrs. O'Dowd arrived at Ravenswood about three days after the confirmation of the counter-revolution in France had reached the county of ——.

"Here I am," she exclaimed, entering the apartment, to Lady Derville and her grandchildren, with elbows raised, and in

rapid motion, as if engaged in the exploit of flying—"Here I am, the wildest little Irish bird that ever found expanded pinions; in fancy off to meet my better half, either in London or Paris. Oh! my honey, Lady Derville, what will I do for you, if you just let me follow the wheels of your family-wafting machine, for your protection? And may be I could be easing you of some of your live stock, by taking the—I see at present—*absentee*, your budding Rose, to travel with me."

Lady Derville coloured, and looked evidently disconcerted; since here was another unexpected overthrow to one of her projects, in this unthought-of excursion of Mrs. O'Dowd's from home; for she had planned to leave Rosabella with her, since taking her on the expedition she considered a measure replete with mischief, as it might implant in her young mind a relish for scenes incompatible with her probable future situation; and might too, possibly, raise that veil—where her management could not operate—which she had so long

contrived, to shade her transcendent attractions from her grandsons, and lead to that event she always dreaded.

Mrs. O'Dowd promptly perceiving there was something in the mind of Lady Derville inauspicious to her request, instantly assumed a coaxing air, and playfully putting up her hands in supplication, implored a decree in her favour.

"Certainly," her ladyship replied, "in respect to travelling with us; but as to my live stock, you cannot diminish that in the form of Rosa, since she does not accompany us to England."

"Rosa not accompany us!" exclaimed Lady Meliora, with glowing cheeks, and eyes distended in amazement; "May I ask why, grandmama?"

"Because her hapless insulation renders her introduction into gay scenes improper; and to take her with us, to mortify her in leaving her out of them, would be unkind."

"Then, madam," returned Lady Meliora, all the natural goodness of her heart beaming from her eyes, and animating her

beautiful countenance with added charms to loveliness, which no affectation at this moment deformed—" then, I do not go. Shall Rosa, the sharer of my infant joys, my childish pleasures, now be banished from a participation in my delights? No, madam, no, friendship forbids it; and if prudence negatives her excursion to England, affection prohibits mine; for here will I vegetate by her side, whilst you go with my brothers."

" My dear enthusiastic child," said Lady Derville, gazing on her with maternal rapture, at this proof of the excellence of her heart—" Rosabella has too much sense to be pained by what prudence dictates: nor is her heart by any means set upon the excursion; for when at one period I talked of not accompanying you, she voluntarily said, 'she should endeavour to make up to me for the absence of my children, by every attention which could be prompted by a grateful heart.' "

" My dear, dear, grandmama!" Lady Meliora exclaimed, throwing her arms around her venerable parent's neck, " and

could you pain that grateful heart by such a measure of unkindness? Oh, no, you could not. She must accompany us, and partake of every pleasure that I do; and if you deem her introduction to certain circles imprudent, because fortune frowns upon her, set the operations of sage prudence at rest, since I have long determined to complete a provision for her. You know when I come to years of lawful discretion, I shall be entitled to twenty thousand pounds, with arrears of interest to —— Heavens, Derville, are you ill?—In pain?—What is the matter?"

"Nothing," returned his lordship blushing.

"Then why did you groan so dreadfully at that moment?—So grandmama, I am determined the moment I have power over my fortune, to give Rosabella four thousand pounds—sterling—Is not that the term, Charles?"

"Why do you apply to Charles? and why did Charles blush so brightly, when you did so?" demanded Lady Derville,

in alarm at what of mischief this suspicious blush might portend.

"Only because it was Charles who put the gift in my head, telling me, the day after Rosa returned from Lady Anne Belmont's, that when he came of age, he should give her four thousand pounds."

At this moment Lord Derville started from his seat, and precipitately left the room, whilst the terrified Lady Derville knew not what to augur from this uncommon interest of Mr. Monson for Rosabella; springing into such a determination, the moment she had returned to his sight, grown from the playful child into the most fascinating approach to maturity; and Lady Meliora proceeded—

"And lest grandmama, that I should lose this power over my portion, I have further determined not to bestow the treasure of my hand on any man, let him pant ever so for the blessing, until after I am twenty-one."

"Unless," said Mrs. O'Dowd smiling, "that my Lady Rosa is provided for by

some great match before that period. This London excursion will prove a lucky chance for that, since in England, where there is such immensity of wealth, men rarely ever find it necessary to think about fortune in their wives."

"But, dear madam," exclaimed Charles, "do you think, in London, where all the beauties of the United Kingdoms assemble as candidates for the election of these disinterested favourites of fortune, our unpretending Rosa will even be looked at?"

The respiration of Lady Derville became much easier—for a painful sensation was removed from her heart.

"I do not know that," replied Mrs. O'Dowd. "A prophet is of no estimation in his own country, so I cannot hope my predictions will find believers; but I would not be petrified by surprise, if your blushing Rose, Lady Derville, my honey, is pronounced in another country a flower of attractive loveliness. But your opinion of Rosa, Mr. Monson, we shall soon have an opportunity of putting to the test; since

we are going to have a jubilee in celebration of peace, which I was anxious to give you timely notice of; and also wish to obtain your ladyship's and Miss Frederick and your two young beaux's promise, to aid our constellations of beauty and fashion by attending it: for now it is known you are about to emerge from retirement, and dash at once into the gay revels of London, your Irish neighbours will feel not a little mortified, if they are deemed unworthy of association with even for one day, and upon such an occasion."

"I would not for worlds offend my estimable neighbours," replied her ladyship; "my intercourse with whom has been hitherto prevented by my disinclination to society, not through any objection to them; I shall therefore attend the jubilee with my young people, should it take place ere I set out for England.

Mrs. O'Dowd having succeeded in two of the objects of her visit, now hastened to commence her manœuvring, to obtain her wish, in being allowed to form one of

Lady Derville's party, even after they arrived in London; but her ladyship not comprehending her covert way of attack, Mrs. O'Dowd was at length compelled to perfectly explain her meaning.

"I have been thinking, Lady Derville," she said, "it will be a mighty good plan for me to form one of your party as an inmate, after our arrival in London; for may be, you will be indisposed sometimes, and not equal to *chaperon* the young ladies, and then I could always be ready to perform your substitute; and I dare say the constant round of public places and private assemblies, you will have to attend, will often prove too much for you; and you will not be sorry to find an unwearying proxy like myself, at hand."

"I shall be most happy to have so eligible and kind a substitute under the same roof with me, in case of accidents," replied her ladyship smiling, "although I do not apprehend much danger of insupportable fatigue from private assemblies."

"Why not?" returned Mrs. O'Dowd, in perceptible alarm. "Surely, the mo-

ment your ladyship and Lady Meliora are presented at court, you will be overwhelmed with invitations to the houses of persons of fashion. Your title will prove your passport."

"That is not so certain," replied Lady Derville. "This book," taking a volume from the table before her, "would not be so universally admired, did it not hold 'the mirror up to nature;' and here you find my sister peeress not only not sought for, but scarcely tolerated in fashionable circles."

"Ah, now, my honey! don't be starting bugbears, to terrify one out of their wits. You know your own connections of *hauton* will place you in your own circle at once."

"Alas!" replied her ladyship, with a sigh of regret, for the privations of mortality; and a blush of contrition, for the deprivations her own, she now feared, ill-advised seclusion, had occasioned her—"Alas! I have outlived every near relation, and friends in polished life my long seclusion has deprived me of; there-

fore this celebrated work has thrown me into much perplexity; since, by its late date, I must suppose the difficulty of the Irish peeress in obtaining an entrance into fashionable circles, what we all are liable to."

"*Possibly*," said Mrs. O'Dowd, now quite crest-fallen, in alarm for her hoped-for introduction to the first circles being thus threatened with disappointment; "but should this prove a true statement of the case, and that the English, whom I thought all urbanity, should really hold our *noblesse* so mighty cheap, we can never get on without some judicious introduction—let me see—Lord Montalbert's sister is married to an English earl, and he—but hold! I have just thought of two elegant auxiliaries; two young women I was extremely intimate with at Bath, when I was there with my great aunt Le Hunte, fourteen years ago; one, a Lady Harriet, or Charlotte—A-B-C-D- I cannot now, for the life of me, remember which letter in the alphabet began her unmarried name, but she since was mated to a judge;

the other, the Honourable Mary, or Jane something; but we were as intimate as sisters, and I gave them each a beautiful keepsake, when we parted, and they the same to me, in token of everlasting friendship; one was an elegant smelling bottle, which I was so giddy to leave behind at the inn, where I slept at Bristol; and the other gift was a beautiful gold chain, which I swopped away with Vim the jeweller, in Dublin, the time I married; and if they are in the land of the diving, I'll scent them out, and make them useful to us."

"But if they are not *living in London*," said Charles, smiling, "their being alive, I fear, will prove of little utility to us:—however, if the English hold us so insultingly cheap, my advice is, to retaliate the contempt, and not condescend to mingle with them."

Mrs. O'Dowd could not by any means agree to this advice, since to be in London, and not to flourish in the first circles, ' be shocking—too humiliating to be and she soon after took her de-

parture from Ravenswood, determined upon the reminiscence of the names of her two dear friends, that they might prove their London pole-stars.

Lord Derville had retreated to the library, to meditate upon the possibility of manœuvring back into his own coffers some part of the eight thousand pounds, he heard were devoted by his prodigal brother and sister to the favourite of their infant fancy: and deeply skilled in the architecture of aerial structures for his avarice, his fabric now was formed on the basis of Mr. O'Lurcher's wife being in the last stage of a fatal disorder, which he flattered himself must soon carry her off to a better world, when, if Rosa could be won to supply her place, all his projects must be realized. O'Lurcher he had observed stealing looks at her for the last two years; which left no doubt upon his mind, that he would snatch at his proposition of making up the match for the equivalent of the moiety of this her unexpected fortune.

From this airy flight of his cogitation-

his lordship was at length recalled by his sister, and her, whose happiness he was thus planning to barter for his own emolument; who entered to seek through the library for some volume, in which by description and plates the Irish costume was illustrated; since in compliment to those heroes and statesmen, who had borne so distinguished a part in the field and in the cabinet, in dispersing those portentous clouds which hung over Europe, Lady Meliora had determined to appear at the jubilee to be given in honour of their achievements in some *pittoresque* costume of Ireland; "but unluckily," she said, "the people in the province surrounding her could afford her no ideas upon the subject; since they displayed no elegance of taste, nothing but ungraceful barbarity in their odious kerchiefs, and unwieldy blue mantles; and what should she do, if she could find no plates illustrative of the ancient costume of Ireland?"

Mr. Monson, who had followed his sister into the library, filled her with indignant displeasure, by gravely assuring her, "that

she need not move from her bed-chamber, unless indeed to visit the cook, to obtain the ancient costume of Erin; which had been merely the simple drapery of a blanket, ingeniously fastened on the bosom by a wooden skewer;" whilst Lord Derville filled her with dismay, by the intelligence, "that his library afforded no such information as she was in quest of."

"Why not apply to Rosa's sketches, in this dilemma?" said Charles; "surely they portray exactly what you seek; exquisite taste, exerted in attiring peasants in her scenery in something of the outline of their own uncouth garb, filled up by the elegance of the happiest imagination."

"I never thought of that," exclaimed Lady Meliora in rapture; "Rosa, you must strike out something for me, to the honour of taste and Ireland."

"I will endeavour," said Rosabella, with a blush and a smile; "but I fear, if I honour taste, I must not attend to copying nature, or I shall fail in that tribute to your country; and indeed, should it prove an evening party, I know not how fancy

can refine any dress of the peasantry I have chanced to see, into becoming attire for a *belle* of fashion."

"Oh! but should it prove a morning *fête*, as Mrs. O'Dowd thinks it will be, the handkerchief and mantle can be beautifully reformed by your taste into something appropriate; and that's a dear and sweet Rose; you who know all the cabineers, do make them a round of domiciliary visits, and examine their wardrobes. Some of the grandams may have holyday suits laid up in lavender, and you can coax them into a display to you."

"My dear Meliora," Rosa replied, "it is evident, how your acquaintance with the neighbouring cabineers stands, or you could form no such expectations from wardrobes, which poverty holds dominion over; however, I will question these aforesaid grandams, and learn, if possible, whether a better style was adopted when they performed the part of a belle at a cake."

## CHAPTER V.

ACCORDING to her promise, Rosabella, winged by her anxiety to oblige her beloved friend, flew off, attended by one female servant, to seek for a model to form a becoming dress for a belle of rank, in the miserable hovels of poverty; and, as she had anticipated, without any ray of success, until from an eminence she beheld a female figure employed in gathering samphire upon a distant rock; the appearance of whom seemed so strikingly picturesque, that instantly she determined upon a closer inspection, to ascertain whether there was any thing unusual in the formation of a *tout ensemble*, that yielded such a pleasing effect.

Rosabella, although timid as the trembling hind in the haunts of men, was a perfect heroine in the unfrequented path of solitude; no rocks or precipice, no tottering bridge of stone heaped on stone,

had terrors for her; and with limbs of exquisite symmetry, knit by the strength of unimpaired health and constant exercise, and strung by the elasticity of agile grace and active youth, her step, though light as the gentle zephyr, which scarcely rests on the flower it flits over, yet ever was the firm tread that guarantees safety: and now, followed by her companion, she made her rapid way over piles of lofty rocks, until she arrived at the conick pinnacle of one, which looked down upon the spot, where the object she thus had sought gathered the treasure she was collecting; and a complete view of whom transformed the anxious expectations of hoping admiration into mortified disappointment. But quickly the natural vivacity of Rosa led her into a hearty laugh at her own toil over towering rocks, at length to behold an old woman, in a faded red petticoat, unequal in its convenient shortness from the scolloped deviations of its fringe of rags; with a blue checked apron suspended like a mantle from her shoulders; her head ornamented with part

of the crown of a man's hat, and its deficiencies made up by a rope of straw.

Rosabella, finding full conviction, that here was no model for taste to benefit by, was turning to retrace her rugged way; when her attention was drawn to another figure upon the pinnacle of a rock, at some distance from, and not so lofty, as that point she stood upon.

This newly discovered object was a man of commanding stature, whom had Rosabella been earlier attracted by, she would have seen he had long been intently observing her; but now as apprehensively she looked to ascertain if this man was of a suspicious appearance, such as she might fear to meet on her lone way to Ravenswood, she saw his foot slip in a heedless movement he attempted forward; and himself suddenly disappear down a precipice, the termination of which was concealed by the projections of other intervening rocks.

The now dreadfully shocked Rosa thought she heard a deep groan wafted

to her ears by the passing breeze; and her before doubting apprehensions were called into real and painful alarms for the life of a man, whom but one moment before fear had suggested flight from, as a possible robber. However, be he what he might, and appearance certainly pronounced him of a superior order of beings, humanity forbade her leaving him there to perish for want of aid, if not already dead; or if he, alas! was so, to leave him unannounced to his friends, without the rite of burial. And as the claims of humanity were those which the heart of our heroine ever promptly answered, she commenced as rapid a descent as the nature of the path she had to tread would admit of, closely followed by Betty Roach, her pitying attendant.

With all the speed of eagerness to save the life of a fellow being, or to mitigate his sufferings, the fleet child of compassion, the lovely Rosabella, soon arrived at the rock the man had fallen from; whom she promptly perceived lying apparently life-

less against a projection of rock, in a cavity into which he had been precipitated.

The moment our heroine beheld him, she concluded from his having fallen upon his feet on a stone bottom, that his legs must inevitably be broken, although the depth of the fall proved much less tremendous than she had feared it was. Yet, whilst from this belief apprehending she and Betty could prove of little use but to summon other aid, she made her rapid way to the fallen man; her natural bashful timidity presenting in this moment of compassion's influence no impediment to her humanity; although she perceived him to be young, transcendently handsome, and from appearance unquestionably a gentleman.

Rosa, from her frequent encounters with oppressive smoke, and other distressing effects of poverty, in the cabins her compassion led her to, was in consequence always provided with aromatic vinegar; she therefore applied some to the nose of this stranger, whilst Betty converted

his hat to the use of a fan, to collect air to promote his recovery; which, to the infinite joy of his two pitying supporters, was much sooner effected than they could have expected from the state in which they had found him, stunned by a blow on his head from the rock, upon which he had fallen; and which had only been prevented from becoming a fatal one by the protection of his hat.

The moment his senses unclosed to perception, and that pleased amazement on beholding her, who was benignly aiding him, permitted his power of utterance, he in accents of melody gracefully made his animated acknowledgments to Rosabella for her compassionate kindness. And upon his assurances of having sustained no fracture of the bone, or any perceptible serious injury; as humanity appeared no longer to demand her presence there, she began to experience all the embarrassing distress of sensitive bashfulness anxious for retreat; but how to effect one she saw no possibility, whilst unknowing if the stranger was equal to

a descent of the rocks unaided; and now all solicitude to comply with the inspirations of her active feelings of propriety, she promptly formed the resolution of repairing to the samphire gatherer, who was still in view, and send her to the nearest dwelling where assistance could be procured, to summon aid from thence; and immediately upon forming this determination, she, with a bright blush, informed the stranger of her intention to go in quest of more efficient aid.

"None can be more efficient than yours has proved," he replied with grateful animation; "but take care, lest it should not a second time be found so effective, how you lead me into similar danger: for whilst to you I owe my recovery, still to your account I have to place the peril I encountered; since, as I rambled on the shore, I suddenly beheld a female form, such as I had not been accustomed to view in my excursions—appear on heights, I considered teeming with danger; and your adventurous path led me to rapid ascent, in the anxious hope of meeting you, and

yielding assistance to you in the moment of impending peril; which, in conceiving inevitable to you, I ceased to remember was possible to myself. And thus you see, as mutual gratitude binds us to each other; you for a service meditated, I for a benefit received,—we ought not, surely, in such haste to part."

"Why no," said Rosa blushing, as she smiled, "if my lingering here would not be to destroy my claim upon your gratitude; since the little service I have performed may prove useless, if I do not proceed in it, and procure assistance to support, or convey you to your home; there for medical aid to be promptly called, to ascertain that you have indeed sustained no serious injury."

And now without waiting for a reply from this interesting stranger, whose eyes, had she looked upon, she would have seen beaming the most eloquent entreaties not yet to leave him; Rosa winged her way to her intended Iris; who soon, through the persuasive entreaty conveyed in a small piece of silver, acceded to the request

of Rosabella; although she said, "it would be no use to go, at all, at all."

"For sure," she added, "the only inhabited dwelling near, that is not deserted at this time of day, is the Cat and Bagpipes; where I'll engage I'll go, as I'd be knowing my way blindfolded, nobody better:—but as I call't there just now for a drap of whiskey, just to steady my head ere I mounted the rocks, myself knows Wat O'Tipple the owner is gone for a day's pleasure to Balanahemp, to see his particular friend hanged; so that unless I will get some traveller, who may, and may not be there, to come help the poor kilt gentleman to be walking home, sorrow much use my going will be."

Rosa had commenced her lingering way back to the stranger,—ashamed at returning, as if to seek a lengthened interview with him; and yet, not knowing how, in possibility, she could avoid that which common humanity demanded; when for the first time in her life she experienced the sensation of joy on beholding Mr. Sternham, who was approaching; and

whom with eager speed she flew to meet, to tell him of the accident she had witnessed, and to entreat him to relieve her present embarrassment, by accompanying her to the stranger, who she saw had made an effort to follow her, but had been compelled, as she concluded, from not being sufficiently recovered, to give up the attempt.

But, to the utter dismay of poor Rosabella, she received a most virulent lecture from Mr. Sternham, upon the extreme impropriety of her conduct, in straying to so lonely a place; and in yielding assistance, however apparently required, to a perfect stranger, who might be the most profligate of his sex, with whom it might prove an eternal stigma on her fame, to have formed her fine romantic acquaintance.

In vain poor Rosa pleaded the resistless call of humanity, which she never had—never would disregard; the more spirit she evinced in her vindication, the more furious he became; and at length told her, "that unless she instantly set out on her road home, he should inform Lady

Derville of what he himself had not a doubt of: that she strayed so often from home, for the purpose of fulfilling suspicious assignations with improper persons."

Rosabella, highly indignant at such unjust and degrading suspicions, and with her delicacy keenly wounded by this utterance, retreated towards Ravenswood, without having formed the most remote conception of jealousy being the actuating cause of Mr. Sternham's violence:—yet it was even so; for this sanctimonious man, who had been upwards of forty years in the world ere Rosabella had entered it, found too many charms in the youth, beauty, and mental fascination, of this his ever favourite pupil, for the serenity of his never tranquil bosom; and the idea of her being about to be introduced into the world, to be seen and homaged by rivals more attractive than himself, had fired his breast with raging anguish and dismay; and upon finding her assistance had been yielded to, and interest awakened for, a man whose watchful observation of her he had witnessed; and saw, although from

a distance, that he was a competitor to be dreaded; infuriated jealousy took its usual course of insulting and disgusting the individual he wished to charm; and in all the spleen and malice of this raging passion, he bent his way towards him he mentally pronounced his rival; calling to Betty Roach, the moment she could be supposed to hear him,—"to follow her who had been her conductor to that improper place."

Betty, whose fear did not assimilate with her hatred of Mr. Sternham, made not the least effort to comply with his mandate; when the moment he came up to her, he fiercely demanded, "why she did not obey him?"

"Will I leave the poor half-murdered gentleman to be dying, without a Christian near him? She replied, That's a quare thing for a minister to command."

"I am here," retorted Mr. Sternham, "to afford effectual and becoming aid."

"For Heaven's sake," exclaimed the stranger, addressing Betty with the elo-

quent look and voice of eager supplication, "delay not in following your young lady, who may meet with a similar accident to mine, and should no one be near to yield her assistance, what ——"

"Fear not, Sir," said Mr. Sternham, haughtily, interrupting him, "she is too well practised in such excursions, not to know her path."

"That's a sure thing," said Betty, as she moved away, "the excursions of kindness and charity she is well practised in; nobody better: and the path to every cabin of poverty and sickness better known to her, than to those myself could name."

"And, was the power now mine to follow her path, in whatsoever course her active goodness leads her," said the stranger; "tell her from the man whose life her humanity has probably saved, I should not be so tardy in endeavouring to express to her the gratitude I feel."

Betty infinitely charmed with the stranger, and highly incensed at Mr. Sternham, winged her way after her, whom she believed a saint on earth, but not

without casting a look every convenient opportunity behind; when she at length saw a man, led by the samphire gatherer, commence the ascent of the rocks; and had the satisfaction, 'ere she descended from that altitude, which gave to her the power of gratifying her present curiosity, to see the stranger commence his slow march, supported by Mr. Sternham and the auxiliary summoned from the Cat and Bagpipes.

The moment Rosabella entered the mansion of Ravenswood, she flew to her beloved benefactress, to impart to her the adventure she had been engaged in, and the subsequent extraordinary conduct of Mr. Sternham to her; a detail which awakened in the mind of Lady Derville not only amazement, but a painful apprehension of the intellect of her chaplain being affected; and in this apprehension Rosa readily joined, until removed by the reverend gentleman himself, on his arrival at Ravenswood, who, convinced some explanation would be required from his patroness for anger so apparently unmerited,

and for virulence so unjustifiable; and, not choosing to confess the actuating spring of his intemperate conduct, had employed his inventive faculties during his saunter from the Cat and Bagpipes, in fabricating a plausible excuse, which, as they were so speedily to quit that neighbourhood, he trusted would answer more purposes than one; and the moment after his return home, he requested a private audience with Lady Derville, in which, he unfalteringly stated:

"That, having discovered there was a most infamous character from Dublin arrived in their neighbourhood, who had been seen frequently wandering around the domain of Ravenswood, it had naturally occurred to him, that he was hovering there with a view of entoiling Lady Meliora, whose handsome fortune—notwithstanding her exquisite beauty—he doubted not, was the attraction to a miscreant, who had spent his all at the gaming table, and in every species of dissipation; he had therefore been on the watch for some days, to discover whether his suspicions were well found-

ed; and having seen Miss Frederick ascend the rocks, he had followed her, to point out the danger and impropriety of her pursuing so lonely a course; when from his elevated situation he beheld the identical reprobate, whose speculations he feared, narrowly observing her whichsoever way she went; and at length, when opportunity to attract her attention offered, he saw him perform a well-acted harlequinade down a slight declivity, which immediately answered the intended purpose by drawing the young lady, under the influence of humanity, into the trap thus artfully laid, to ensnare her into acquaintance with him, to promote his sinister designs upon Lady Meliora: that instantly he hastened to annihilate the speculations of this execrable villain; and he feared in the agitation of his indignant ire against the miscreant, and provoked at his very dear young friend, with all her excellent sense, to be so readily duped, that he had expressed himself a little too harshly to her. But he trusted the serious cause of his intemperance would plead in his

justification; and although he was inexpressibly sorry at having given pain to the gentle bosom of Miss Frederick, yet he could not but rejoice at having been enabled to put a period to such a plot, menacing the peace of a family he was so devoted to: and that he had terminated the infamous projects of the profligate he could not doubt, since he had frankly informed the dire designer, that he had suspicion of his plans, and should subvert them; and as the fellow who came from the Cat and Bagpipes to his aid proved to be a confederate, or pretended servant, he had given him some hints also, that he felt conviction would promptly send them from the Cat and Bagpipes, which he found had been their hotel since their sojourn in that neighbourhood."

The resentment and alarm, awakened by Rosabella's recital in the bosom of Lady Derville, now changed to the most grateful feelings for his thus rescuing her beloved Melicus from the sinister pursuit of so horrible a profligate; and that gratitude was considerably augmented in the course

of the day, when Mr. Sternham dispatched his servant to the Cat and Bagpipes, to inquire, " if the gentleman who had fallen from the rock in the morning was still there?" and who returned with information, " that he was some hours gone."

By desire of her benefactress, Rosabella readily forgave the harsh lecture of Mr. Sternham, although she could not so promptly forget it; particularly when she saw new clouds of hostile import gather on his brow, on receiving the intelligence of the meditated jubilee, and that all the family of Ravenswood were to attend it; intelligence which seemed to electrify him by some powerful shock, that blanched his cheeks and paralyzed his frame: and from that moment all the sketches of Rosabella's creative pencil, for the dress of Lady Meliora, were turned into the most potent ridicule by him; and with facility he embraced every opportunity of adding force to Lady Derville's evident wish of withdrawing from her promise of appearing amongst her neighbours ere she set out for England.

In a very few days after this meditated jubilee was first announced to Lady Derville, Mrs. O'Dowd again appeared at Ravenswood, to impart what the committee of ladies, assembled the preceding day for the purpose, had determined upon; provided her ladyship approved, since, although she declined being a patroness, nothing was to be finally arranged without her approbation.

"You must know, my honey," said Mrs. O'Dowd—for as honey was a favourite appellative of this lady's, and had obtained for herself its appropriation, she good-humouredly continued it to all to whom she was partial, "you must know, our poor round Robin will never come round Lord Montalbert, to lure him forth; for there is his lordship in a fever. So, my honey dears, ere this provoking man took to his bed, or our sweet Robin went on its useless mission, Lord Montalbert had given orders for a jubilee of his own; not for us *élégantes*, but to feast and feed his tenants, and all the neighbouring poor: the scene of festivity to be held on the

lawn, which slopes down to the embankment of his lordship's side of the beautiful part of the river, which forms so picturesque a boundary for so many miles of his domain. Well, my honies, on this aforesaid lawn tents and all sorts of accommodations are to be erected for the poor; and in the great hall and saloon in the abbey the tenants are to be feasted. So all this unexpected arrangement has compelled us to a change of plan; as those who have tenants consider it expedient to feast them too: and as all have not lawns reaching to the Silver Serpent *, the plan is, to borrow the opposite lawn from Sir Peregrine Roveley's steward for our combined tenants to assemble, for the cardinal virtues to meet face to face, and that one bank should not be jealous of the other; but ourselves not to be left out of the scene of joy, or to be led by despairing disappointment under the water, we mean to come over it, gliding in gaily decorated boats, with bands of music, and bands of Cupids, and banners, and

* The name of the above-mentioned river.

beauties, and all that can embellish the scene; embarking at set hours, according to distance, and the first boat to call on their next neighbour, until we thus accumulate into a grand procession, to appear between the well peopled banks; to sail up, and row down the beautiful river, contemplating the scenery, and the happy multitude on *terra firma*, until our own hour for a *pic-nic* dinner, when forming a line in close contact, we are to feast amid myriads of admiring spectators; and then in the course of time we are to sail off to Natland creek, where our carriages will take us up, and bring us in high glee to the Town Hall at ——, where we will conclude the day with an elegant ball."

"But are we not first to return home, to redress?" demanded Lady Meliora, in alarm.

"No, my honey, no redress for you; no, my beautiful Blowzalinda, you must figure away for the evening, as a half wet, half soiled Naiad."

Mrs. O'Dowd having a hundred places to call at, at least a hundred questions

to ask of various persons, and as many consultations to hold upon the "style of costume" to be adopted at the jubilee, which would answer for morning, and look well in the ball room; now shortly after departed, full of high gratification that Lady Derville had approved of all the arrangements, as they had been principally suggested by herself; and soon after she was gone, the conversation reverting to the illness of Lord Montalbert, Rosabella expressed her regret with so much animation at the little prospect there existed of his attending the jubilee, that Lady Derville, alarmed lest this unsophisticated girl's seclusion should have nurtured romantic weakness in her bosom, to lead her into an ideal passion for the first character she became fascinated with, rather gravely demanded:

"Why should you so regret his lordship's absence?"

Rosabella brightly blushing, replied, "I cannot but regret, dear Madam, losing an opportunity of seeing the favourite great nephew of the Bishop of —— and Lady

Anne Belmont, whose virtues I have so often heard them eloquently paint; and for whose fate I have often been led through sympathy to tremble, as they have mourned over the dangers he had just set out to brave in Portugal, when I arrived at ——."

"Rosa, I am positive this is not the whole cause of your regret; and do, grandmama, bring her to confession," exclaimed Lady Meliora, laughing; "for my curiosity is on tenter-hooks to learn why she looks so foolish about his lordship."

"I would advise your not having me brought to confession, even to remove your curiosity from its painful station," responded Rosa, smiling, yet blushing still more deeply—"lest you should look foolish too, about his lordship."

"Come, Rosa," said Lady Derville, gravely, "I make it a point, that you explain the cause of this evidently embarrassing regret of yours relative to Lord Montalbert; since we all know you too long, not to be aware that your mind

never betrays powerful effects, without just causes."

"Dear madam," replied Rosabella, "do not treat a little airy structure of my wishes as a solid fabric for seriousness to enter: I merely, Lady Derville, had formed an earnest wish, whilst hearing so much of the perfection of Lord Montalbert from the Bishop and Lady Anne, and of his benevolence in this neighbourhood from the poor, that fate might doom him for the husband of this most inquisitive young lady."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Sternham, with a sarcastic laugh, almost maniacal, "and did no similar wish for self obtrude, to trench upon your disinterestedness, Miss Frederick?"

"Sir," repeated Rosa, in a tone fully expressive of her astonishment, and fixing her brilliant eyes, distending with unaffected amazement, upon his agitated countenance; "you surely, Mr. Sternham, forget who I am—or, alas! rather—that who I am is unknown, or you could not

suppose me so mad a visionary: but to that recollection, Sir, I am ever awake; and I trust, while remembering my situation, I shall form no projects that can call forth contempt for my presumption."

"Now is your time, Sir, to propose for Miss Frederick, or else never," said Charles, with an arch smile; who had been keenly scrutinizing the eccentricity of his preceptor's extraordinary petulance to Rosabella, until a suspicion of the ridiculous truth had darted into his imagination; "since if you wait until you are a bishop, Sir, you see her humility will not permit her to accept you; and should it happen to be an archbishoprick you are translated to, your chance will be still more effectually demolished."

## CHAPTER VI.

LADY Meliora's vanity, lighted up by the wish of the affectionate Rosabella for her union with Lord Montalbert, had promptly extended to a pile of kindling combustibles, in the glowing transport of the high triumphs it would honour her charms by, could she perform the glorious exploit of re-conquering that heart, supposed to have become insensible to every female fascination; and the hope, that in consequence sprung up in her sanguine bosom, of the *possibility* of his lordship's recovery before the jubilee, and the *impossibility* of his not joining in it, when the scene of general hilarity was to be brought so completely to his very door, now added more powerfully to her former anxiety, for becoming by the exquisite taste in her dress, as she was by her surpassing beauty, the most attractive luminary at this day of national festivity; so that poor Rosabella

was allowed no peace or rest, until she designed a mantle and style of handkerchief for the head, according with Lady Meliora's manifold purpose, of appearing in her native costume with striking elegance of taste; and by the facility of pantomimic promptitude in throwing off her kerchief and mantle, as she proceeded from Nutland creek to the Town Hall in the coach, enable her to appear with hair and form arranged, as a candidate for increasing admiration, by the simple grace of her dress for the ball room.

And not only the contriver of this display of taste and ingenuity, but the executor also, was Rosabella decreed by the anxiety of her friend; for, in alarm lest the patterns should be purloined for the use of any contemporary, Lady Meliora would not suffer them from beneath the roof of Ravenswood; and only by the magical hand of Rosa would she permit this all-conquering garb to be composed.

And an all-conquering garb it seemed predestined to be; for as Charles contemplated the many mental charms, evinced

by our heroine in her anxiety to adorn his sister, even sacrificing all solicitude for making her own appearance captivating; he began to discover, that he was perfectly correct in his suspicions, which he had lately found dawning upon his mind, of this unpretending girl being the possessor of exquisite beauty; and at length one day he was so forcibly struck by this discovery, that in a burst of admiration he exclaimed:

"Why, Rosa, you are resolved upon presenting a new subject for the pencil.—Venus attired by the Graces has been long delineated; but Psyche, attiring the Queen of Love, we have not before seen."

"What mean you, child?" demanded Lady Derville, in alarm.

"Nothing, madam," replied Mr. Monson, "but what is very obvious: that Rosa seems just to have taken it into her head, all at once, to expand into beauty, like an opening rose-bud; and I do believe, were her eyes bright black, instead of brilliant azure, and had she not so much of the *angélique* in her disposition, I should

promptly expand into Cupid myself, as the adorer of our Psyche here."

"I admit the objection to my eyes, as an interdict to this unthought of performance," said Rosa, smiling, in the utmost composure, at what she conceived mere *badinage*—"but how this angelic tendency can influence against so surprising a conquest, seems rather paradoxical."

"Not in the least," replied Mr. Monson; "for I would as soon plunge at once into the lake of perdition, as wed a woman with such a mind as yours."

"Ah, my good sir," replied Rosa, "I thought your paroxysm of complimenting was too strong to hold."

"But let me explain myself," returned Charles; "were you my *sposa*, I should feel so assured, that you would conscientiously perform all you promised in your marriage vow, whether I merited to be loved, honoured, and obeyed, or not; that in perfect security I should cease to attend to my own deserts, until from carelessness of conduct I might fall into slip-

pery exploits, and so get on from bad to worse, until there might be no stopping my career."

"So then," said Rosabella, "a bad wife can only secure your proving a good man."

"Not exactly a bad one, but one who by putting me in continual alarm, lest she should prove one, if I did not keep all my perfections in constant view, might compel my goodness to be ever on the alert."

"Well," said Lady Meliora, "since blue eyes, and an angelic disposition, break off this alliance between a new Cupid and Pysche, only wait, Mr. Slippery-tricks, until we go to England: where, I prophesy, we shall find, just arrived from Castile, Rosa's mother, and a Spanish sister, the express image of Rosa; only with those fierce black eyes you want; and just sufficient of her father's d—l in her, to make her the menacing safeguard that you require."

"And if the Spanish coffers come over well filled," said Lady Derville, gravely, by no means comfortable at the conversation; "to pour out the portion necessary

to make you live in some sort of respectable style befitting your rank, I may not withhold my consent."

"Provided the grim Don has stalked off with himself," said Charles; "since, by Jupiter! not all the ducats in his stores should bribe me else, to become our dear Rosa's brother."

"That is an excellent amendment, Charles," exclaimed Lady Meliora, "and shall be carried *nem. con.* Let us be determined upon that horrid Don's death, without compunction; for then we shall be sure of Rosa's beautiful mother's emancipation from misery; and then the riches she consigned herself to wretchedness for, come into her possession, may pour forth a portion for our Rosa too."

Lady Meliora, by having inadvertently struck the chord of the never extinguished grief of Rosabella for the too possible misery of her mother's life, sent her young friend precipitately from the room, to conceal a rising tide of sorrow's agonizing tears: whilst by her last allusion she awakened new speculations, or at least

added weight to some dawning ones in the bosom of her elder brother; who had been apparently poring over a political pamphlet, during the foregoing conversation; while, in fact, he was attending to every word uttered, and observing Rosa, as intently as his brother.

The supposed dying wife of Mr. O'Lurcher had most unopportunely been supplied, by some incantation, with a new lease of life; which had entirely overthrown the speculations of Lord Derville upon the moiety of our heroine's unthought of fortune; and he had been full of new projects, upon what he could strike out for his own advantage from these eight thousand pounds, when he overheard a dialogue between two of the female domestics, who were employed papering up the furniture of an apartment, preparatory to the absence of the family from Ravenswood:—a dialogue in which they talked of our heroine as a being beyond compeer; and unceremoniously expressed their artless wonder, that their lady did not make a match between her and *Master Charless*; since it

was a mine of wealth she would prove to the man who should have the luck to get her; for she was so clever, and managing about her own clothes, making them look even prettier, and more becoming, than Lady Meliora's Dublin ones, and contrived always to have twice as much to give away as her ladyship; and who, but herself, could have saved the old lady such a fortune, in Lady Meliora's dress for the jubilee! and then she was so lucky, for when the mountebank came she won the only prize worth having; it never rained when she went out; and her health was so pure, that she had never cost their lady five pounds in her life to the doctors.

Although Lord Derville imbibed nothing of the superstitious influence, which operated on those who held this dialogue in a room adjoining to the one he was in, yet he found new speculations arising in his bosom; awakened by this eulogium upon the economical abilities of Rosabella, and combining, with the eight thousand pounds she was to be presented with, the

idea of what in possibility she might save her husband in expense, for one scale; while, in the other, he placed all that a fine lady, trained to no thrifty habits, believing her own large dowry might sanction prodigality, was likely to spend for him: and he was deeply engaged in calculating upon which was approaching a probable preponderation, when the idea of Rosa's becoming possessed of property through her mother's marriage with the Spaniard turned the scale in her favour: when, in hostile counteraction to the projects of his grandmother, he determined cautiously to prepare for a possibly expedient siege, through a little more attention to our heroine, to clear the way for a successful attack; should the peace of Europe realize the airy fabric of his castle rearing sister, in bringing Rosabella's mother to the United Kingdom, to seek her child, and portion her from the Castilian's stores.

When Rosabella's tears began a little to subside, and reflection led her to consider the necessity of tranquillizing her

aspect for a return to her employment; wishing to remove a coming headach by the aid of aromatic vinegar, it first struck upon her recollection, that the stranger had not restored it to her; and, when sufficiently recovered to return to her work-table, she announced—

"That the sharper, whom Mr. Sternham had so fortunately chased from their neighbourhood, had however succeeded in one depredation upon the family, having marched off with her essence box."

"Has he?" exclaimed Lord Derville, full of his speculation upon increased attention to Rosabella—"Well, never mind that trifling deprivation; for, when we go to London, I will give you a much handsomer one."

The sound of Lord Dervlle's meditating a gift electrified all who heard it, as some sudden revulsion of nature might have done: but on the heart of his grandmother the electricity struck with a direful shock, nor could she ascribe this sudden sacrifice of long, habitual, and inveterate

propensity, to any cause, but rising attachment of the tenderest kind; and her terror, at what she believed the realizing of an evil, which, from Rosabella's first establishment at Ravenswood, she had so much apprehended, now almost overpowered her; and introduced such a degree of uneasiness into her bosom, that an appearance of serious indisposition soon succeeded. When Mr. Sternham had the gratification of hearing her ladyship's physician, Doctor Westrop, pronounce his interdict to her attending the jubilee; he took care to intimate to Rosa—

"That she would be considered the most ungrateful of all ingrates, did she persevere in her intention of joining in the general festivity, whilst her benefactress was ill."

Our heroine required no admonition from Mr. Sternham, to arouse her to a sense of her duties: she had that within her, which was ever her prompt, resistless Mentor—a susceptible, grateful heart; and she had determined, the moment

Doctor Westrop had given his opinion, that nothing should induce her to quit the post, which gratitude assigned her.

But there seemed no inducement on the alert to win her from this resolution of remaining with her benefactress. None of her surrounding circle attempted any argument against her voluntary sacrifice of the first gay scene ever presented for her participation; for all had secret motives for wishing our poor insulated Rosabella to perform a recluse at Ravenswood on the day of general hilarity.

The still cherished hope of keeping the charms of Rosa in that shade, she long had trusted would exclude her from the dangerous *éclat* of universal admiration, was the actuating cause of Lady Derville's wish for her seclusion.

Lord Derville's reason sprung from his speculations for his interest; since the moment he began to contemplate our heroine as a possible prize, he felt the most painful anxiety for her preservation to himself; and, therefore, to shield her from any probable conquest, that might militate against

his contingent projects, became his interest, and inspired his wish for her absence from the jubilee.

The motive of Charles for a similar wish was, like himself, formed on more generous principles: since it was for Rosa's sake, as well as for his own, he was anxious to check the ardent admiration he felt augmenting in his bosom; and which, he feared, the voice of general eulogium, pronouncing in favour of her beauty, might awaken to an impetuous flame, to consume at once his pride, his prudence, his grandmother's happiness, and above all, the amiable—lovely Rosabella's own estimation in the world; since who could doubt, did a mutual attachment spring up between them, that censure would affix the stamp of deep transgression upon her gratitude.

Mr. Sternham's policy for sentencing our heroine to the home station arose alike from his fear-inspired wish of shielding her from the pursuit of rivals more genial to her, than even he could pronounce himself to be: and to escape, through her

absence, from a possible embarrassment, which he had inadvertently menaced himself with; by a rash detraction of a man, who might attend the jubilee, and bring those defamations to light, which no inspirations of tortured jealousy could have led him to hazard, had not his absence from Ravenswood, when Mrs. O'Dowd announced the projected jubilee, left him wholly ignorant that such a matter was in contemplation; and, on the delusive security of Lady Derville's long practised seclusion of her family, with their speedy departure for England, he built his hope of escape from the detection of his slander.

Lady Meliora's silent acquiescence in the determination of her young friend, to absent herself from the *fête*, we regret to state, had a sinister impulse also for its operation.—The opinion given by Mrs. O'Dowd, of Rosabella's pretensions to personal attractions, had aroused her ladyship from the happy security she had been credulously lulled into, of the utter impossibility of our heroine's ever becoming a rival to her transcendent fascination; and,

determined upon the glorious triumph of subduing Lord Montalbert's heart, she learned to dread poor Rosa's charms; lest, if they effected no more, they should take even one obvious moment of admiration from the *éclat* of the strikingly decided and instantaneous operation of the conquest she had predicted for her own resistless allurements.

At length the day of the *fête* arrived, and came with the auspicious promise of uninterrupted sunshine; but not more tranquilly serene was the aspect of the weather, than appeared the lovely Rosabella, in the moment a promised pleasure found its disappointment through the inspirations of her duty: and not more dazzlingly bright the beams of the cheering luminary of day, than the brilliant beauty of Lady Meliora, now secure of the triumph she meditated; as the bulletin from St. Leonard's Abbey that day announced his Lordship's convalescence, and she would not suffer a doubt to cloud the elevated state of her hopes of Lord Montalbert's attending the festivities of

the morning, in compliment to the ladies who had so distinguished him by the flattering manner of their invitation.

The painful fears of the evils to be apprehended from the presence of our heroine at the *fête* were no sooner hushed in the mind of Lady Derville, by the departure of her grandchildren, and the apprehensively embarrassed Mr. Sternham, to join the assembling fleet, than compunction visited her bosom, for accepting the voluntary sacrifice of pleasure, made at duty's shrine, by the grateful Rosabella; and, as she contemplated the lovely countenance of her *protégée*, although she saw temper unclouded serenely seated there, and that her manners beamed with sweet affectionate attention; she thought she could perceive an unusual pensiveness steal over her brow at intervals of silence, or moments of inaction.

And in this observation the penetration of her ladyship was not deceived; yet it was not her absence from the *fête*, that caused this pensiveness of melancholy character:—the susceptibility of her na-

ture had introduced a wound to her heart, through the apparent unkindness of Lady Meliora and Mr. Monson, in making not one effort at overruling her determination to remain with her benefactress; for whose indisposition they thought so little sympathy necessary, as not to bestow one grave look upon it: and conduct so unusual in her first and kindest friends pained and grieved her, while the full conviction of its being wholly unmerited by her only added to the pang of wounded affliction.

The more Lady Derville contemplated the unruffled sweetness of the manners and aspect of Rosabella in this hour of disappointment, whilst convinced her heart was pained by it; and the more of her affecting attentions she received; the more and more she regretted, that any circumstance could arise to induce her ever to wound the feelings of so amiable a being; and at length awakened a powerful anxiety in her mind, to devise something to give a stronger sunbeam of pleasure to the day of this votary of gratitude, than even the cheering ray could yield by the consciousness of per-

forming her duty to her benefactress. And at length, in perfect knowledge of the heart she wished to cheer, she struck out the means effectually to do it: for it was to execute a mission of benevolence for her ladyship, to convey to a poor tenant his deficiency in rent, which Mr. O'Lurcher had determined to distrain him for the following day; and for whom Rosabella had been for some time awakening the interest of Lady Derville.

Our heroine sallied forth alone to the dwelling she was commissioned to cheer, which was situated so contiguous to Ravenswood park, that she felt no necessity for protection.

And this agent of pity had not proceeded very far homeward, after the gratifying execution of her pleasing mission, when, entering a lane which led to the enclosure of the Ravenswood grounds, she bounded up a bank, upon which was erected a gate she had to pass through; when not having raised her eyes to anticipate the circumstance, to her utter amazement she found this barrier held open for her by the

[illegible] from Mr. Sternham had repre-
sented [illegible] miscreant,
[illegible] misery to
[illegible] with.

[illegible] and
[illegible] bowed her
acknowledgments for his attentive courte-
sy, and [illegible] presented; which to her
further chagrin and embarrassment, the
stranger [illegible] with her, and said, as
he [illegible] his place at hers,—

“Miss Frederick, it is not to an accidental meeting, believe me, I should have deferred the honour, the happiness, of expressing my lively sense of all I owe to your humanity, had I not been withheld by consequent illness, and the interdiction of Lady Derville's chaplain, from presenting myself at Ravenswood; not only to attempt my acknowledgments to you; but, to restore this essence box, which I had inadvertently retained in my possession, not foreseeing, that the happiness of your return was to be denied me.”

Rosa coldly said, “she was sorry to hear of his illness; but that Mr. Sternham's

knowledge of Lady Derville's disinclination to the reception of strangers at Ravenswood must plead his excuse for an interdiction, that possibly might have appeared ungracious."

"I own, it did appear ungracious," replied the stranger, "after I had unhesitatingly announced myself to him, and requested him to inform you, whom your humanity had so kindly aided, and who requested permission to wait upon you to attempt his grateful acknowledgments: and this information, and this request, however ungraciously inclined the reverend gentleman was to me—I must conclude he did not withhold from you."

"Some information upon the subject, he certainly did impart," said Rosa frankly, while blushing with embarrassment, at even glancing at information so little advantageous to the stranger; "but your wish of calling upon me, sir, he forbore to mention: possibly from a belief, that such an intention might be displeasing to my benefactress, who has wisely adopted the shade of retirement for a being, who owes

her even more than the submission of a child:—since to her I owe a debt of gratitude I never can repay, and can only evince my sensibility of, by submitting to her wishes in all things; and when I tell you, this amiable individual is so unwell, that only to execute a mission of her benevolence could I now have left her, you will, I trust, excuse my eagerness to wish you a good evening, now I have arrived at the entrance of the nearest path that can take me to her."

And having come up to a door, which led into the grounds of Ravenswood, and being provided with a key, Rosabella made her graceful parting courtesy to the stranger; whose air of mingled surprise and mortification, whose countenance proclaiming amazement and regret, which she caught a view of, as she closed the door in her retreat from him, filled her in return with wonder; and as she paced her way to the house, she frequently ejaculated in mental soliloquy—

"What could the expression of his countenance portray?—Assuredly, not the dis-

appointment of villany,—for in that appeared all that was amiable, all that was interesting: but yet, even an aspect of such enchanting sweetness, I am told, villany and deep design can delude by—Alas! alas! and can this be so? Can vice look as this man looks?"

The moment Rosabella returned to the presence of her benefactress, she learned from her, that Mr. Sternham had been made so ill by sailing on the tranquil Silver Serpent, that he had been compelled to leave the gay scene, and return home to his bed; and Rosa then, on her part, hastened to inform her ladyship, of every particular of her encounter with the sharper, whose designs Mr. Sternham had so providentially penetrated.

"However," she added smiling, "although I was half alarmed, and wholly annoyed, by meeting this reprobate, it answered the purpose of effecting the restoration of my property: and now my dear little essence-box, gift of my beloved Meliora, once more welcome to my longing

eyes, that despaired of ever beholding you more."

When taking off the envelope of tissue-paper, she discovered the box she had received was not her own, for hers was plain silver; the one she held, a superb gold one, studded with gems of apparently great value; and the moment surprise unchained her faculties, she gave it to Lady Derville; and entreated her to devise some method of restoring it to the man, who, she almost feared, had defrauded some honest jeweller, for the purpose of feeing her to become his agent in his designs upon Lady Meliora.

## CHAPTER VII.

Lady Meliora and her brothers did not return from the scene of national rejoicing, until the subsequent morning had advanced to its sixth hour, when her ladyship found our heroine arisen for the day; and although overpowered with fatigue, by the first night she had ever passed in dancing, she paused e'er she sought her pillow, to impart to Rosa (whom now, as the fear of *rivalité* was happily subsided, she felt dear to her heart as ever) that Lord Montalbert was her captive; while she herself had fallen so many fathoms deep in love with him, that should any thing intervene to the prevention of their union, she should die of a broken heart.

Rosabella in the buoyancy of her juvenile spirits was almost wild with rapture, at the idea of her aerial castle for the happiness of her beloved friend being likely to prove a substantial building: but when

she reflected more calmly on the subject, she felt sorry her dear Meliora could tell, even to her, that she had fallen in love so instantaneously.

Lady Meliora was too much elated with the triumphant prowess of her charms, to find repose when she sought her pillow; and therefore, not much later than her usual hour, she arose, and attended the breakfast-table of her grandmother, to whom she gave, to the further regret of our heroine, the same unhesitating account of her own immediate captivation, and of Lord Montalbert's.

Lady Derville, idolizing her grandaughter beyond all human beings, felt full conviction of this paragon of perfection possessing power to effect the subjugation of half mankind; but so prompt a captivation of such a melancholy man, as Lord Montalbert was represented to be, she rather thought extraordinary; yet in the hope of finding ground for a belief so consonant to her wishes, she desired a minute detail of all the incidents of the preceding day.

"Well then, grandmama," said Lady

Meliora, "you must prepare for a marvelously long story, for I am sure it must take me a month to tell you every incident; for I am positive more things occurred yesterday, than ever could have been wedged into any other day that ever came; and yet, it was certainly the shortest one I ever remember to have passed—and further, *Aieule*, do not expect a narrative given of yesterday's *fête*, as you would find it in a newspaper or a novel: no, mine will prove a *pot pourri* description, interspersed with notes or observations by a novice in gay scenes.

"Well, madam, I proceed to commence my medley of events with our embarking on our voyage; which was not so extended as I expected, since we only sailed up, and rowed down the Silver Serpent once; for to our infinite surprise, when we encountered Mrs. O'Dowd, she informed us, the plan was changed, for we were to take our repasts in the old ruin of Sir Peregrine Rovesley's castle; as in the boats we should have remained divided parties, which would be quite stupid.

"So, grandmama, after the assembling of our fleet at the embankment of Sir Peregrine's lawn, we commenced our disembarkation; and my introduction by Mrs. O'Dowd (to half the world I verily believe) took place; and amid this multitude I marched off to the old castle, where you will rue Rosa's absence, since she would have given you an animated description of all the romantic beauties of the scene: but I can only tell you, that all was delightful; that the ground was strewed with rushes and sedges; that the ivy mantled walls of the ruin were enlivened with wreaths of everlasting roses; that we had two martial bands concealed in different turrets; that their respondent notes were sometimes like magic sounds; and that our breakfast was laid out with great profusion, yet with infinite taste.

"But dear grandmama, do not be angry with me, if I confess, I was more occupied in making minutes of my effect upon those around me, than the effect of the scene upon me: but, certainly my eyes had been despoiled of half their mis-

chievous brilliancy, by the annoying belief of all present, that Lord Montalbert was not sufficiently recovered to attend; and notwithstanding my invincible *pressentiment* that he would come, as he did not appear at breakfast, I was terribly alarmed; and so were all the ladies, except those, whom Derville and our exquisitely handsome Charles honoured with their attention.

"Well, grandmama, as the absence of Lord Montalbert rendered our *déjeûné* quite *triste*, and destroyed my power to eat, I had full opportunity to remark those around me; and I really was quite delighted to observe so many pretty, nay beautiful, girls present; since that you know added to my triumph in receiving the palm, which, even ere his lordship decided in my favour, was adjudged to me.

"And there was a Mrs. O'Blarney, Ma'am, who praised me greatly, and excused her thinking me the biggest beauty 'in the wide word' as she expressed herself, for she was a barbarously wild native —'for you are,' she said, 'the exact image

of my son, who is the biggest beauty of a man, that ever roved under the canopy of Heaven; and signs by it, for all the girls are dying for him—Ah! now, won't you be letting me introjuce you to him? though that same may be dangerous, for may be like Narcissus, that it is falling in love with his own image he will be; and that will never do; for although he will be a barrowknight, when he is created one,—which myself has rason for knowing he ought to be—and that he has some of the ouldest blood, true Milesian, to be found in the kingdom, in his noble veins; and whin his puny cousin dies, which he will, being more than half entered death's door already, his will be an elegant fortune; yet it is a match my Lady Derville will never be consenting to, as the creathur is a little wild; but 'tis only the bewitching wildness, that the girls all admire, but which a serious attachment will cure; for to be confessing the truth, although it is flirting with all the girls he is, who are mad in love with him, yet his heart has never yet been touched; and ough! 'tis the best of

husbands he will make, for his is the tinderest of hearts, and the sweetest of tempers! and och! but 'tis his wife will be a doting piece, when he finds an angel to adore; and myself thinks one has descended from the spheres this very day, to stale his heart.'"

"Mrs. O'Blarney never shall enter my doors!" exclaimed Lady Derville, with warmth.

"Dear! why not grandmama? for I can assure you, she did not draw too partial a portrait of her idol; since certainly he is uncommonly handsome, and so lively and pleasant, and pays compliments so judiciously, that one cannot but conceive he must be good tempered and amiable; and now were it not for his odious name, any woman might take him, even on the recommendation of his mother; and I am positive a number of the girls, who attended the jubilee, are desperately in love with him; for I promptly perceived, how his marked assiduities to me excited their envy; and particularly when he danced so many sets with me at the ball."

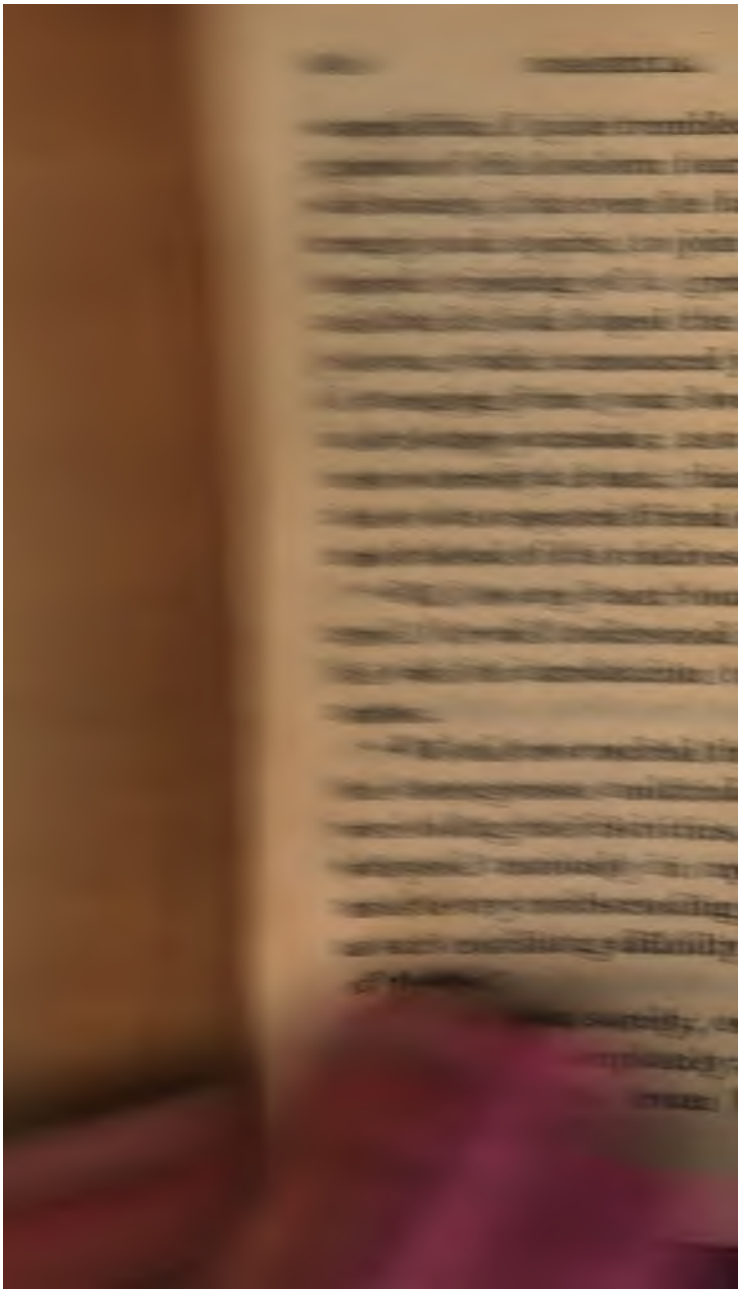
"But, my dear Meliora, do not go off to the ball without your dinner, I entreat you; consider, you eat no breakfast; and such long fasting will destroy your descriptive energies," said Rosa, smiling. "Besides too, you forgot to introduce us to Lord Montalbert; an honour I own myself particularly impatient for."

"Ah! but I was doing as children perform by a *bon-bon*, reserving him for the last.—You must know then, that when we arose from breakfast, it was determined we should go and pay our civilities to the tenantry, ere we re-embarked, to glide through the beauties of the embankments of the river; and I was proceeding with Mrs. O'Dowd for my *chaperon*, and Mr. O'Blarney for my escort, towards our place of destination, when Sir Owen Luttrell approached our moving multitude, with the most transcendently handsome, majestic, graceful, and elegant looking man I ever yet beheld; although he looked pale and melancholy; yet, that certainly made him appear still more interesting. Well, this enchanting being,

with the most resistless sweetness, and captivating grace, paid his compliments to all who knew him, and requested an introduction to the rest.

"Well, my dear auditors, from the moment Lord Montalbert, for this little less than demi-god was his lordship, from the moment Lord Montalbert's eyes rested upon me, I riveted his undeviating gaze of admiration; for I did contrive to steal many an anxious glance, to perceive the progress I was making in the achievement I had predetermined; and promptly I had the rapture to observe him request, with a betraying blush, and embarrassed air, Sir Owen to present him to me; and from the moment an introduction took place, he remained almost invariably an entranced fixture by my side.

"And, most kindly he inquired for you, grandmama; and politely regretted your not being amongst those assembled on that joyful occasion, which had urged him, even disinclined as he was from ill health, and other causes—and when he pronounced 'other causes,' such a deep drawn sigh



although I had met a few of the Protestant ones at church often, I never looked at them: so that when Lord Montalbert asked me, which were our tenants, I could not tell him; but looked like the veriest fool in motley garb:—however, promptly perceiving where my brothers were paying their civilities, I corrected my error, by pretending I had not known where our tents had been pitched.

"But when I advanced to those annoying animals, my embarrassment returned; for although I bowed, and simpered, and did all in my possibility to be civil, not one could I address by name; nor an inquiry make for an individual belonging to them.—Oh! how I did wish for you, Rosa, to prompt me; but still, although you were absent, you acted as my good genius; for the singularity of my awkward silence was veiled by the volubility of every female tongue, chaunting out inquiries for Miss Rosy, the darling! the jewel! the creathur! the honey-bird! in short, the idol of them all; however, as I was not quite confident of having per-

formed a particularly shining part in this scene, I was most happy at being summoned to embark upon our projected sail.

"And now, fair ladies, all my transient mortifications were forgotten in my exulting triumph, when Lord Montalbert presented his hand to me, and led me to his own beautiful yacht; which, being infinitely larger than any other of the vessels, accommodated an immense number; and those numbers were not slow, I assure you, in accepting his lordship's invitation; and the moment every one was disposed of, Lord Montalbert took his station by me, and conversed almost exclusively with me, or Charles, wherever he could do so without rudeness to others; and, oh! what a charming man he is! and how enchanting he would be—nay, he will be; for I know my lordship will soon remove it—when the shade of melancholy, which [illegible] over his fine intelligent countenance, and often clouds the brilliancy of his conversation, is removed; and no moments of my life ever passed so rapidly, for none [illegible] so beguiled by fascinating in-

fluence, as those I passed on the Silver Serpent with him.

"The beauties of the scenery were very striking, I believe: for his lordship expressed his admiration of them, with the same enthusiasm Rosa would have done; and I was obliged to be enraptured too, although I felt mortified, that he could attend to any beauties but mine: however, I derived some consolation from the wonders I had performed in exciting his admiration, and riveting his attention; and in the conviction, that time only was wanting to effect the rest.

"Too soon I thought the moment of our debarking arrived; for as the embankment on his lordship's side of the water was not considered safe for the landing of the ladies, in consequence of an unusual swell, we were compelled to relinquish our intended pleasure of visiting St. Leonard's abbey; and therefore, as his lordship's tenantry were to dine early, and he was to preside at the principal table he was under the necessity of bidding

standing near; 'I remember, when we were boys at school together, you were prodigiously proud, when the witty performed the transposition of your name into Maypole!'

"'And I may retort, how vain you are of your memory, Conroy!' returned Mr. Mayple, looking as furious as if he meant a challenge should ensue.

"'Why, as to that,' responded the perfectly composed Mr. Conroy, 'I have no cause for vanity in this reminiscence; since half a century is no great stretch of memory for a man of sixty-six; as it was only in the year sixty-five, that you and I left school for college.'

"'What a d—l of a chronologer you are,' replied Mr. Mayple, 'seventy-five you mean.'

"'No, no,' returned Mr. Conroy, looking mighty wise, 'I am correct; and here is Lady Luttrell can vouch for the accuracy of my statement, since it was the identical year she was born.'

"'It was seventy-five then, to a positive

certainty,' exclaimed Lady Luttrell, colouring up to the eyes, and looking so angry.

"'Phoo, phoo! my dear Madam, I can bring proof incontrovertible.'

"'Well, well, my dear sir, and I can bring proof incontrovertible, in my looks,' returned her ladyship, recovering her good humour — 'who, beholding my juvenile aspect, could doubt my assertion being the accurate one?'

"'Why, to say the honest truth, you do wear surprisingly, or rather, you do not wear at all:—but looks are deceitful things; for there now is Mrs. M'Carthy; who would ever believe she has been married nine and twenty years?'

"'Mr. Conroy!' Mrs. M'Carthy exclaimed, pale with vindictive passion; 'I really shall begin to think, if you enter into the regions of romance in this manner, that your thread of life has spun its circle to the stage you set out from. Me married nine and twenty years, indeed! Miss M'Carthy will be mightily obliged to you,

to heap the hoary honours of age on her head thus.'

"'Why, bless her! we all know the day of her birth; for a most remarkable one it was; for it was the very day Frederick the third of Prussia died; August the seventeenth, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-six; and sure we all know she was christened Frederica Whilelmina in consequence.'

"'How you dream, sir,' exclaimed Miss M'Carthy, almost sobbing with vexation; 'It was in compliment to the amiable Duchess of York, on — on her arrival in England, that I was named.'

"'Well,' said a pretty pert little girl, a Miss Dillon, smiling exultingly; 'I am so glad you can't know my age, Mr. Conroy; for I was born in England.'

"'Yes, I know you were,' he replied, 'for I dined with your father, in Pall Mall, the very day of your birth; and got d—ishly tipsy with him, in striving to console him for his disappointment, in not having a son and heir.—Ay, let me see;

it is exactly twenty-one years ago, the third of next month.'

" ' Take that, you old blundering parish register, you!' exclaimed Miss Dillon, dashing his snuff-box—out of which he was regaling himself at that luckless moment—up into his face. The snuff flying to his eyes almost maddened him with pain; and the surrounding gentlemen, rushing to the river, procured water to relieve his agony; but I was now perfectly enlightened upon the subject of why Mr. Conroy was shunned.

" Our dinner collation, or, as Mrs. O'Blarney termed it—our ' *cowld collection* '—was composed of every delicacy, appropriate to such a repast; and Sir Herbert Fitzgibbon, and Mr. O'Blarney, were my supporters; both very lively, but both such incessant talkers, they occasioned my losing a great deal of what was passing around me; but, however, I perceived a Miss Malony and Miss Dillon excessively amused by a Mr. O'Gorman's manner of devouring, who sat precisely opposite to them; who did, certainly, with great per-

severance, and evident relish, consume surprisingly; sending plateful after plateful, with wonderful dexterity, down his throat, on the point of a knife, without inflicting any wound, except upon the nerves of each sensitive beholder; and at length, after a famous deposit, in effecting which the whole blade disappeared, Miss Malony, with a most conciliating smile, requested to know, 'how long he had been a pupil to the Indian jugglers; and if they had taught him any more of their amazing performances, beside that alarming one of swallowing knives and swords?'

"'Faith, Miss Malowny, then, 'tis not to an Ingian I need be applying, to larn to swallow steel draughts,' he quietly replied; 'but nearer home, even to your own ould father, who, although no conjurer, was as neat a juggler through the swallow, as ever came from Oriental shore; for all the draughts he drenched his patients with brought flowing into his pocket draughts, which enable his daughter, little

Molly *Malony*, to play her amazing and amusing deceptions, in her performance of a humbug fine lady.'

"Miss Malony, who is most horridly annoyed at the recollection of the profession her father has made his fortune by, turned a thousand colours, and seemed ready to cry; and I really could not pity her, since she brought on the unpalatable retort completely by her pertness.

"I have a number of anecdotes more to tell you; but my impatience to meet Lord Montalbert once more impels me to set off with you from Nutland Creek to the Town Hall:—but on the way, the amazement of Mrs. O'Dowd in the coach, when I took off my handkerchief, to find my hair, by one shake of my head, in the most becoming order of simplicity; and by discarding my mantle, my form arranged for a ball room, could only be surpassed by her chagrin, at not having herself contrived some similar device, for her appearing in stylish costume at the ball.

"The Town Hall at —— was decorated

very famously, both externally and internally, with appropriate devices; and certainly all had a very good effect, and was wonderfully admired, until I appeared to turn the gazing eye on me; since never was there a greater sensation of surprise awakened; for they all looked upon my prompt change of attire as little less than necromancy;—and more sensations, I can assure you, than that of surprise, were awakened by my becoming change of attire; but I'll leave it to Mrs. O'Dowd, to tell you all about that.

"Mr. O'Blarney was my first partner; and the moment I stood up to fulfil my engagement, a Mr. Keating asked me for the two next dances: but he had such a vulgar snub nose, that I would not exhibit with him; and forgetting what Mrs. O'Dowd instructed me to say, to manœuvre out of the fangs of a disagreeable partner, I merely said, I was sorry I could not dance with him, and immediately after Sir Herbert Fitzgibbon became a candidate for my hand, and was accepted; and just as this acquiescence was uttered by me, to

my infinite amazement and delight, Lord Montalbert, attracted thither by the fortunate Meliora, arrived; and almost immediately seeking me out, attempted some excuse for the inconsistency of his conduct in coming to the ball, when in the morning he had announced his health not sufficiently re-established to attempt it: and as he uttered his apology for this caprice, he blushed most deeply, and that blush stamped on my heart the delightful conviction of the certainty of my conquest. And now I wished poor Sir Herbert in Elba; for had I not unfortunately engaged myself to him, I should have had the triumph of showing to all present his lordship devotedly seated at my side; for as to his dancing, I knew that must be out of the question.

"So my dear friends, most cruelly against my inclination, I marched off with Sir Herbert to join the dancers; and the moment I arrived at the top of the set, and was about to figure away in my very best style, Mr. Keating stood before me,

and savagely informed me, 'I should not proceed, unless I danced with him; since my rejection of him was not caused by a prior engagement.'

"'Stop Lady Meliora Monson or take my place, at your peril, sir,' exclaimed Sir Herbert.

"So I shrieked, grandmama, I was so terrified, and up flew Charles and Lord Montalbert; and then such a *brouillerie* ensued; for Charles, who is always so impetuous, insisted upon taking the quarrel upon himself, since he was my brother; and dear, dear Lord Montalbert interfered as a conciliator; and then the three Furies quitted the room, accompanied by Lord Montalbert, Derville, and several other gentlemen; and I was dreadfully alarmed; but at length Lord Montalbert returned, and with the melting kindness of tender interest soothed my agitation, and dispelled my fears, by every assurance of the tempest being hushed."

"The tempest hushed!" said Lady Derville, pale with dismay, and trembling

in alarm. "But did his lordship say it would not burst out again at a more convenient season? Oh Meliora!"

"Dear grandmama, do not be alarmed; they all but Mr. Keating returned, and danced away so merrily the remainder of the evening, that there could be no warfare in their heads."

"Was Lord Montalbert mirthful?" demanded Rosa, almost as much alarmed as Lady Derville.

"Certainly not," replied Lady Meliora, exultingly; "for he was too serious in his admiration of a certain nymph, to be any thing but grave. But he retired before supper, for the languor from recent indisposition conquered inclination: however, before he departed, he took care to engage Charles to breakfast with him, and which until this moment I forgot; and also, that Charles bid me inform you of it, to account for his absence this morning."

Lady Derville, uttering a deep groan, fell back in her chair, with all her faculties suspended; when Lady Meliora reiterated the most piercing shrieks, and Rosabella,

bathed in tears, used every restorative within her reach for the recovery of her beloved benefactress; who at length rewarded her affectionate anxiety by unclosing her eyes, ere the household, attracted by Lady Meliora's shrieks, appeared.

"Oh!" Lady Derville exclaimed, in tones of anguish, "my Charles! my darling boy, is now, I doubt not, a mangled corse; sacrificed by his own impetuosity, and his sister's imprudence. Oh! Rosa, Rosa, dispatch, I implore you, a courier to Lord Montalbert, to learn if he is at St. Leonard's Abbey; or if this pretended breakfast was devised to deceive me?"

Our heroine instantly flew to comply with the wish of her benefactress; and as she was winging her way towards the servant's hall, she encountered Mr. Sternham, to whom she instantly imparted Lady Derville's alarms for the safety of her grandson, and entreated to send off an express to St. Leonard's Abbey, to learn if Mr. Monson was there?

"I am shocked, Miss Frederick," Mr.

Sternham exclaimed, trembling with anger, "I am shocked at such indecorum; thus, without any regard to the delicate reserves so beautiful in your sex, to make this display of your attachment to Mr. Monson, just as you perceive him entering the avenue with a phalanx of other gentlemen.—Yes, madam, in defiance of your debt of gratitude to your benefactress, whose heart would be broken if such an union was to take place, you appear in this ensnaring agitation, to display to him your anxiety for his safety. Fy! fy! retreat to your chamber and conceal your weakness."

"I have nothing to conceal, Sir, but, in respect to your function, the indignation I feel at your unjust, as uncharitable inferences," said Rosa, with her before pale cheeks, now flushed by wounded delicacy; and flying to a window to ascertain if Mr. Sternham's assertion was true of Mr. Monson's return; and perceiving him indeed amid a party of horsemen, pacing his way up the avenue, she darted back to the chamber of his grandmother with this cordial comfort; and instantly Lady Meliora

flew down to receive the gentlemen, leaving the still tremblingly alarmed Lady Derville to the tender care of the grateful and affectionate child of her bounty.

## CHAPTER VIII.

ALTHOUGH Rosabella was deeply wounded and offended, at the accusations of Mr. Sternham, and determined to relate all to her benefactress; yet she considered this moment of anxiety and scarcely subdued indisposition, not the one for such a communication. She therefore tranquillized her aspect, and sent all her cares to the invisible retreat of her susceptible bosom; and as she sat with her beloved protectress, paying her every attention of duty and affection, wondered much that Mr. Monson did not appear to terminate his grandmother's apprehensions; since she could not doubt of his sister's having taken an early opportunity to impart to him their existence. But at length, the sounding bell below proclaimed the departure of visitors, and shortly after Mr. Monson and Lady Meliora appeared, the latter in elevated spirits, ap-

parently having lost all recollection of the alarm and consequent indisposition of her grandmother.

"Oh! Charles! Charles! my beloved child!" exclaimed Lady Derville, the moment she beheld him, "tell me on the truth and honour of a gentleman, has the thoughtless folly of your sister led you to hazard your life? or does that peril yet await you?"

"My dear madam, you have nothing now to apprehend for my safety," Charles replied, much affected by the anxiety she evinced for him; "Lord Montalbert, with infinite trouble, brought us all to reason; and although Mr. Keating and myself met this morning, most hostilely disposed towards each other,—by the magic of his lordship's arguments we exchanged forgiveness instead of balls; and parted in perfect amity."

"Ten thousand blessings on his lordship's head!" exclaimed Lady Derville, with affecting energy; "for he has saved the rending of a parent's heart."

Tears started to the eyes of Mr. Mon-

son, who took the hand of his grandmother, and as he affectionately pressed it, said—

"Why how did this sensitive heart of yours learn to imbibe this alarm for me? Meliora did not cherish the least suspicion of it."

Lady Meliora, now in an agony of tears, threw her arms around her brother's neck, and bitterly sobbing, implored his forgiveness, for having endangered his life; and assured him, she would in future conduct herself with more prudence, and try, if possible, to think of consequences.

Rosabella, influenced by the feelings of a grateful heart, regarded Charles Monson with the attachment of an affectionate sister; to hear, therefore, of the peril he had so narrowly escaped, could not but sensibly affect her; and although she strove to conceal her emotions, yet so much of her distress was visible, that Mr. Monson, nearly subdued by it, fled from the fascination, and rapidly re-mounting his steed, galloped off to pay visits to those belles, whom he had admired most the preceding

day, with a hope of chasing the dangerous impression, awakened by the touching interest Rosa had evinced for him; since invincible pride more and more revolted from the idea of an union with the insulated *protégée* of his grandmother, who possessed not that transcendence of beauty to extenuate the degrading alliance.

Neither did the emotion of our heroine escape the observation of Lady Derville, for with terror she observed it, and its effect upon the precipitately retreating Charles. And now, fully persuaded that the peril she had so long apprehended was about to be realized in the mutual attachment of those young friends, her thoughts, painfully occupied by the misery this agonizing belief inflicted, could scarcely be abstracted a moment from it, even by Lady Meliora's incessant recapitulation of the further proofs she had that morning discovered of her certain conquest of Lord Montalbert; who had been one of the gentlemen, who had drawn her so rapidly from the chamber of her grandmother.

Nor were the alarms, and self-upbraiding for imprudence in her benevolence, likely to experience diminution in the mind of Lady Derville, when the subtle Mr. Sternham, inflamed by jealous apprehensions, and influenced by an erring judgment, regardless of consequences, took an opportunity of intimating to her, "That he had discovered Miss Frederick was artfully throwing out her lures, to ensnare the heart of Mr. Monson."

The faculties of Lady Derville were nearly again subdued by this intelligence, plausibly communicated under the specious mask of gratitude and friendship.

To the idea of Rosabella's being an artful ingrate the heart of Lady Derville could not subscribe; but of a rising attachment between her and Charles she felt full conviction; and in all the misery anticipation of ruin to the latter could inspire, she panted to send our heroine once more from Ravenswood, and would thankfully have accepted the crafty offer of Mr. Sternham, to consign her to his sister's care, could she devise any plausible excuse for such an

extraordinary measure, that would not introduce suspicion of the fact into the mind of her impetuous grandson, to accelerate his ruin.

It was in the evening of this day, in which so much inquietude had been conveyed to the mind of Lady Derville; and, while her thoughts were painfully occupied in the perplexing research for a specious plea to effect the separation of Rosabella and Charles; when a carman arrived from the village of Myrtle's Town, bearing a letter from the *ci-devant* Mrs. Cormack, now Mrs. Kilbride, to our heroine; who, believing it merely a letter of thanks for the prize she had won from the mountebank, which she had sent to her first protectress, commenced the perusal of an almost illegible scrawl, without one anticipating feeling of what it contained, and which formed the following composition:—

"Dear and darling Miss Rosa,

"It is dead you must be thinking me, in regard to my not having the manners to

write long ago, to tell you, I am intirely obliged to you for the elegant coat * you were after sending me: but, dear Miss Rosa, that is not the case I assure you; for I am alive, but more grief to me! if I can say merry; for 'tis kilt myself is with trouble; and, as to the beautiful coat, 'tis not the likes of me that will be wearing it, for sure 'tis gone it is, to dizen out one of the other wives—for 'tis lots of us the villain has!—Kilbride tuck to himself in all the ports he visited, which it seems sailors are tolerated so to do: so, for the mercy of Heaven! jewel! never marry a sailor: however, our priest, Father O'Flannagan, says—'he will be hanged for Poll Ligamy;' but why so, I know no more than the Pope in Room, nor indeed do I care, so that it is hanged he is, the rapperie!

"Ochone, Miss Rosa, jewel! never while you live, keep marrying after the fashion that I have done, and more grief to me! But sure it was the fortune-teller was

* Gown.

the ruin of me, by showing me the husbands on my ring-finger, and bad luck to them for plagues!—Poor Cormack, you know, dear, murdered himself wid the whiskey; but what was worse, he spent the property, and left me rowling down the hill; and so, as a prop, I marries Casey, bekease, dear, he had some little property; and we would have got on elegantly, barring that he bate me twict a day at least, and that nothing would serve him but we must be quitting the public line, and let lodgings to say-bathers: but none ever came to our tinament in the summer, let alone the winter; so Casey fretted himself to a notamy, and starved me into a skeleton; so that it was well for me he kilt himself, the negur! wid his mane ways.

"Well, dear, had I contented myself in my second liberation, I would have been happy; but as gentle and simple began flocking to my lodging house, bekease I I was such an elegant landlady, so clane and civil, I tuck it into my head—as the Fates had cast my distiny in regard to

husbands, and that I had not had my compliment yet, and, as burying them so often was a mighty expensive tax, I would be managing, and have one a good tin or twinty years younger nor the others, that he might live the longer; and that was every rason in the wide world myself had for wedding Kilbride, who kept pelavering me in respect to his being a sailor, he would be bringing me the world and his wife of elegant curosities, to deck my lodgings wid; but not a thing ever he brought me, jewel, save sorrow and distress; but, as for the taking ways, it was he that understud them, nobody better; for not a thing that was worth taking upon the primises, barring myself, but he tuck off wid him, the deceiver! to Dublin, were 'tis wid another wife he is, the rap of the world.

"May the powers above keep and presarve you, Miss Rosa dear! but it is murdered with trouble myself is, or my name is not,—what I have not much rejoiced in—

"JUDITH KILBRIDE."

P. S.—" Ah! then, Miss Rosa dear, why did I write to you, but to tell you what I was forgetting?—which is a quear thing any how; but what I had to say first, was, that I never was so stagnated in my born days, when, as I was sitting in my poor deserted, stripped, and plundered lodging house, three nights ago, to hear a sort of unsteady rap * at the door, which murdered me wid screeching, thinking it was kilt I was by the thieves, Kilbride at the head of them, that would be following the rap in, to shoot my life out: however, I was greatly disappointed; for after repeated calls in a woman's outlandish voice, which my mind misgave me I had heard before,—I ventured to open the door, when, och! och! och! Miss Rosa dear, who shud stand plump before my eyes, but the skeleton of that say gull of the world, Madam Ann Toney, who was after leaving you, dear, to perish in a Christian land.

* Knock.

" ' Och ! you varlet of a divil !' says I, ' is it tired Beelzebub is of you, that you are returned on our hands?'

" So, with that, she crossed herself, and stepped into the passage; when seeing that, and likewise that she got over the horseshoe on the threshold without let or hinderance, myself became more civilized, and I axed her into my parlour, to rest on half the one chair that was left me; and soon was cute enough to make out of her gibberish — for sorrow plainer she speaks nor she did, which is a quear thing, now she is nigh hand sixteen years oulder—with great difficulty, ' that she would die soon; ' and wanted *Donny** Rosabella to tell to her all that lay heavy upon her conscience:' so, wid that, I offered her half my bedstead—for my feather-bed days are gone, dear,—and advised her to go by Crawley's car to Ravenswood: but, ochone! Miss Rosa, dear, the next day she was seized with a fit of perplexity, and if I was not in one too, I wonder at it; so

* Donna.

off I runs for Father O'Flannagan, who instantly fetched the apothecary, who bled her to death's door to safe her life; but, who says, 'she will never be able to go to Ravenswood, nor to move a fut again, except to her berrying.' So, Miss Rosa, dear, if you wish to know who you are, you must come to Myrtle's Town without a morsel of delay; for she says, only to you will she tell what she has on her mind, and refuses to confess to Father O'Flannagan; which, to be sure, is not much matter, only for form sake; as he would not be understanding her, he knowing no more of Spanish, nor she of Irish, than if they had no tongues in their head; and, jewel, don't be afear'd to come, thinking I have no bed for you, since father O'Flannagan has prevailed on his brother, who takes in lodgers, to lend me an empty house of his, until the gentry will be coming, whin he will set it. So, dear Miss Rosa, no more news at present of your kith and kin, from your distitute

"Friend until death,

J. K."

The varying hues of Rosabella's complexion, with her increasing agitation, as she proceeded in the perusal of Mrs. Kilbride's second letter in postscript, attracted the attention of Lady Derville, and promptly led to an explanation of the cause. And as her ladyship really experienced the most lively interest and sincere sympathy for this deservedly beloved child of her bounty, not much of selfish motives, to effect even a temporary separation from Charles, operated in her orders, for the immediate conveyance of her *protégée* to Myrtle's Town, accompanied thither only by Betty Roach; since Lady Meliora's being her companion was as much out of Lady Derville's code of possibilities, as granting permission to either of her grandsons to attend her. Neither the housekeeper, nor her ladyship's woman could be spared, and Mr. Sternham could not offer himself as her protector; for now he found, when this opportunity so unexpectedly presented itself for obliging Rosa, and in unwitnessed *tête à tête* to commence his wooing, that

he had not proved himself a profound politician; for now he dared not betray interest for the individual, whom he had accused as an artful designer, without implicating either his own principles or his veracity.

Without a friend to advise her, in case she had perplexities to encounter; to support her, if fortitude had its part to sustain; or to soothe her, if sorrow awaited her; poor Rosabella set out upon her little journey, handed to the carriage by Lord Derville, whose adieu was accompanied by a speculating pressure of the hand, as the crisis was probably near, which would determine the expediency of addressing her; and Lady Meliora, in her farewell, "lamented not being able to be her companion in a moment of such severe trial to feelings so susceptible as hers."

In the short distance of thirty miles, from Ravenswood to Myrtle's Town, no adventure befel our heroine; and as she drew near the little more than hamlet, where she expected so much important in-

telligence to await her, all the fortitude she had been endeavouring to strengthen her mind with seemed gradually forsaking her; and, as the presentiment of evil, she felt an unconquerable sensation of despondence stealing through her frame, inimical to every exertion she could make to remand her firmness to support her, through all she might have to be informed of, relative to her mother's too probable miseries with her jealous tyrant.

The house Mrs. Kilbride had been kindly accommodated with was easily traced, since it was one of the very few brick edifices Myrtle's Town could boast; but no carriage could make its way up to the door, for to it a narrow causeway led, that overhung the strand, and which at high water often was washed over with the spray, and at spring tide with the rolling waves; whilst at low water a beautiful sand made that part of the beach the favourite promenade of the few who visited this romantic spot.

This structure, which with two companions in a row raised its lofty head

so conspicuously above the surrounding straw-roofed cottages, and to which Mrs. Kilbride and her sick charge had removed the preceding day, consisted of one small parlour, and a kitchen on the ground floor; two bed chambers up stairs, and two attics; and its only outlet was a small garden railed off from the causeway; yet this inconvenient, and evidently dangerous habitation, with the others similarly situated, were sought after with avidity by the rash visitors, and were constantly inhabited during the season for sea-bathing.

But Rosabella bestowed no thought upon the safety or situation of the dwelling she was entering; her every idea was absorbed in her approaching meeting with Antonia; she, who had unquestionably borne her from her sorrowing mother's arms, and thrown her, in infant helplessness, without name, connections, or any stay but pitying Heaven, upon the mercy of the world—the protection of strangers; and in this meeting, what had she not to hope and fear?

Although our heroine had constantly continued a duty-inspired correspondence with her first kind protectress; and had never omitted any opportunity afforded to her of evincing her unslumbering gratitude, yet never had she beheld Mrs. Kilbride, since the hour Lady Derville had taken her under her own care; but who now welcomed her return to Myrtle's Town with such transports of delight, that Rosa, although most naturally all wild impatience for an interview with Antonia, received and returned all these cordial greetings, as a heart endowed with grateful remembrance dictated. When at length she could, without wounding the feelings of this early friend, she ceased to practise such painful forbearance, and, almost subdued by her emotions, inquired for Antonia, and when she might be permitted to see her.

"Faith, jewel," replied Mrs. Kilbride, "she lies stretched out above, ready for death, which is certainly upon her, in the room above, fornent the *say*, which being the biggest, the apothecary, one Mr. Far-

rell, ordered her to be put into it, and it was *kilt* he thought the creathur was wid the removal; and so he tuck more blood from her, though sorrow drop herself had left in her veins. But, dear, he bid me send for him the instant moment ever you arrived, that he might be at hand, set in case the interview murdered her; but which himself says ought not to be deferred, for the ease of her conscience, since 'tis by a thread her life is hanging."

Accordingly, Mr. Farrell was instantly sent for, and as promptly obeyed the summons; and he, with much kindness, immediately proceeded to prepare the dying Antonia for the appearance of our heroine. When, with infinite difficulty, he made her comprehend that *Donna* Rosabella was arrived, the mentally and bodily suffering woman, through the powerful effect of conscience, fell into a fit of a new species; and, for a considerable length of time, her frame was shook by convulsions; but when, at last, this alarming attack subsided, she eagerly

called for Donna Rosabella; whose hand she grasped, and, in pure Castilian, implored pardon, "for cruelly becoming the agent of a jealous barbarian, in tearing her from her angelic mother's arms:" and, when our heroine replied in the same language, with mild, forgiving, soothing kindness, her surprise and joy were so excessive, they again overpowered her frame with convulsions; and, although this fit was slight, it so apparently exhausted her, that it left her either unwilling, through caprice, or unable, from debility, to answer those questions, which Mrs. Kilbride importuned our agitated heroine to put to her.

But to those inquiries, humanely and kindly asked, all the replies poor Rosa could obtain, were—"that her mother had been living, when Antonia last had intelligence from Castile—that her brother also was living, and serving in the British army with honour;" but to this indefinite information, and to her repeated supplication for the title and place of residence of

her mother's husband, and for her own father's name, she could learn nothing more satisfactory in addition, but that all would be found in the little tin box, which stood on the table by her bed side; and which she implored Rosa not to permit any one to touch, until after her decease.

But, through the night, Antonia had a succession of epileptic attacks; and the morning found her articulation so affected, and her intellect so apparently impaired, that Mrs. Kilbride pronounced, "she *would* not live through the day;" and sent out invitations to her wake.

However, upon the arrival of Mr. Farrell, Rosa found his opinion relative to immediate dissolution not so decisive; and, in consequence, she sent off an express for Lady Derville's physician, which her ladyship had kindly desired her to do, should occasion require it.

Doctor Westrop arrived as speedily as possibility would admit of. Having known Rosa from the hour she became an inmate of Ravenswood, he highly regarded

her; and now, feeling deep interest for her, he spared no exertion of his skill for the restoration of Antonia's faculties; not that he cherished much hope of their renovation; yet he could not bring himself to despair, because that was menacing to the welfare, perhaps, and certainly to the gratification of Rosa. But, as many patients in an extensive practice demanded the attendance of Dr. Westrop, he could not dedicate his whole day to Antonia; but, ere his departure, he kindly promised to call at Ravenswood, to state all things to Lady Derville, and to visit Myrtle's Town the succeeding day.

As it was the opinion of Doctor Westrop, that some moment of renewed faculty might be permitted to Antonia, Rosa, ever predisposed to believe all that could prove the beneficence of a merciful Deity, scarcely left the chamber of the dying penitent either day or night; lest the possible moment of renovated powers might arrive during her absence, and the probable advantages of it be lost to her; so that when Dr. Westrop returned on the morrow, he

found our heroine a fixture by the pillow of Antonia.

After examining the state of his patient, Doctor Westrop again pronounced her case immedicable; but that yet there might arrive some moment of temporary renovation of faculty.

"But, my dear Miss Frederick," he added, "I do not suppose this transient restoration likely to prove an instantaneously effected one; therefore your constant attendance is unnecessary; for it must, in all probability, be of a nature to allow sufficient time, either to summon you from your pillow, or from a circumscribed promenade, for the indispensable purpose of preserving health; since I look upon the neglect of striving by practical means, for the preservation of that blessing, as a crime little short of suicide:—so now, my good girl, whom I have ever observed to be the most docile of human beings, come walk with an old friend upon that inviting strand. It will do us both good; and, as for you, it is my professional prescription, that you pace these sands, for a limited

distance, every opportunity afforded by the retiring tide."

Rosa, grateful for such kindness, was instantly equipped for her walk, and set out with her respected friend.

## CHAPTER IX.

ANOTHER twenty-four hours dragged heavily over the closing scene of Antonia, without any material change occurring in her hopeless situation; no fits, however, disturbed her night's repose: yet her sense of observation, and power at effort seemed only to animate, when Mrs. Kilbride or Betty Roach touched her tin box; upon which, by violent gesticulation she evinced her anger.

Rosabella was not unmindful of the charge given to her by Doctor Westrop, relative to that exercise he recommended for the preservation of her health; and as soon as the retiring tide would permit it, she sallied forth to take her solitary ramble on the strand; and although she could not withdraw Betty from her attendance upon Antonia, and Mrs. Kilbride was engaged in culinary preparations, she experienced no unwillingness at venturing;

assured that, as the hamlet was yet unfrequented by its summer visitors, no one would accost or annoy her, although she was alone.

Full half an hour, Rosabella had paraded up and down before her elevated dwelling, without encountering any individual; and as the day became pleasanter, as the sun arose nearer its meridian, she was induced by the picturesque appearance of a fishing boat on its return, to seat herself upon a rock, to sketch the scenery it moved in, to withdraw her thoughts even for a momentary respite from the torture of painful incertitude. Always provided with a pencil and sketching cards, she promptly set about her design; and unmolested had nearly completed her beautiful performance, when the sudden fall of a cane close behind her, caused her to start up in alarm; nor was that alarm diminished, when by her side she beheld the identical being, whose schemes of villany Mr. Sternham had discovered.

In terror and chagrin, Rosabella was bounding to a retreat; when self-pos-

session rallying, almost in the moment it was chased, whispered her, that it would evince more dignity, it would operate in better policy, to betray no fears; but quietly to walk away, as she made a repellent bow of recognition:—but the animated joy which illumed the stranger's expressive countenance; the respectful homage of his graceful manner as he addressed her, almost disarmed the intended chilling discouragement of her air, as she bowed in returning courtesy.

"Ever on rocks, am I fated to meet you, Miss Frederick," he said, in a voice of thrilling melody. "Oh! may it be prophetic of the solidity of our future estimation of each other!"

"Even rocks," said Rosabella, with that species of serious smile which encourages no familiarity—"Even rocks, sir, are not firm to their station, when their basis is insecure; and esteem can only endure, whilst its foundation is substantial: but as strangers can form no judgment of the pretensions to estimation each other may possess, until introduction of incontestable

respectability can assure us of the merits of each other; forgive me, if I feel the necessity of suspending an acquaintance, which accident alone commenced:—but ere I now bid you, perhaps, a final farewell, allow me to say, that I should have rejoiced at this unexpected meeting, had I the power of restoring to you some very valuable property of yours. My essence box was of little worth, but as the gift of a beloved friend; that you in mistake presented to me so very costly, I left at Ravenswood, lest I might lose it here, and be deprived of the power of restoring it to you; but that I may do so, have the goodness to inform me, where and to whom Lady Derville can return it; since it was to her care I confided it in trust for you."

"Miss Frederick," said the stranger, sorrowfully, as in amaze he contemplated the contradictious manner and aspect of our heroine; the one, all firm repellency, the other, all blushing, trembling, obvious timidity—"although you are, I see, thus resolutely determined to inflict upon me the mortification and regret of being

shunned, even as a mere acquaintance, by you, permit me to apologize for my presumption in the little exchange I made. I could not part with that, which had belonged to her who had saved my life; and I hoped you would have excused my substituting a *bagatelle*, to remind you of him whose life you had saved. But, if I am not to be honoured by having this my earnest wish accomplished, Lady Derville has surely learned from her chaplain, to whom she may return that, which from some false impression of the donor, you will not condescend to retain."

"I hope, sir, for your sake they have been false impressions," returned Rosabella, with a parting bow; "but as Lady Derville appeared to sanction my belief of them, you cannot wonder I was anxious, most anxious, to terminate our acquaintance."

"The motives of Lady Derville, and Mr. Sternham, for such an evident misrepresentation of a character they well know deserves it not, I must conclude are cogent; and that the conscience of each

can answer for it," said the stranger, walking onward by the side of Rosa; "I therefore will not interfere with their projects at present, but they must forgive me, if I adopt some of my own. I see no reason under Heaven, why to accomplish their designs, I am, without one opposing effort, to yield up tamely the acquaintance—the anxiously panted for friendship, of Miss Frederick. Gratitude—if no other powerful feeling operated—would forbid it; and to convince you I merit not thus to be wholly erased from the list of those you honour with your esteem, I will obtain that introduction of incontestable respectability, which, I trust, will ensure for me less repelliency of conduct, than you at present adopt towards me."

"But why—wherefore, sir," replied the painfully distressed, and blushing Rosabella, "should you take the trouble of procuring an introduction, that must prove useless? If Lady Derville has motives for not admitting you at Ravenswood, believe me, they must operate against my forming an acquaintance with you here,

where every thing under the form of propriety forbids it; and while, for your sake, I may wish those motives proved unjust to you, yet, being Lady Derville's, I must respect them; and although, if known to me, my reason might not subscribe to them, yet my duty must teach me submission to their power."

"Miss Frederick," exclaimed the stranger, with animation, "whilst even you thus mortify, you charm me; and each moment I converse with you increases my anxiety to remove this interdiction to a better knowledge of each other, which your belief of my unworthiness has formed. I will not now longer obtrude upon you, because your artlessness betrays how much it pains your feelings of propriety: but yet I trust a time may come, and that not distant, when you will feel conviction you need not shun me; when you will know, that had Mr. Sternham been firm to truth, even unprotected as you here are, you need not have flown from a few moments' converse with a man of honour."

Rosabella having now reached the cause-

way leading to her home, with cheeks mantled by blushes, made her parting bow to the stranger; bounded up the steps, closed the little gate, and by an impulsive glance, perceiving him a fixture below still gazing intently after her, she made another bow of grave civility, wearing no encouraging aspect; and entering the house, she felt sorry, unhinged, she knew not why; but concluded it must be because she had been compelled to so much ungraciousness, and a thousand times throughout the day she mentally repeated:

"Can it be true? Can it be possible, that this man is a profligate?"

On the arrival of Doctor Westrop the succeeding morning, he pronounced it probable, that Antonia might linger on for many days, to prolong that suspense so torturing to our poor heroine; and so much he commiserated her insulated situation in such a trying moment, that with evident pleasure he informed her, "a very charming couple were coming to Myrtle's Town immediately, for the health of their only

child, to whom he must procure for her an introduction."

"I am not personally acquainted with them," said Doctor Westrop; "Captain Gore's uncle I know, but I am sorry to say, from the professional monopoly of my time, not intimately; and him you, even in your seclusion, must have heard of; Mr. Trench."

"Heard of Mr. Trench!" exclaimed Rosa, in a tone of enthusiasm, "Yes, I have heard of him; and so much to the honour of human nature heard of him, that I have felt much concern at his not forming one of those few admitted at Ravenswood; particularly as I knew his most amiable son, and that the Bishop of —— and Lady Anne Belmont highly estimate him: but some cause exists for Mr. Sternham's disliking him. Certainly, their plans of seeking their own way to Heaven, and leading their respective flocks thither, do not assimilate."

"It is true," returned Doctor Westrop; "for I never see or hear Trench, that I do

not long to become a better man, to emulate his virtues. I never see or hear Sternham, without being tempted to say, 'Are you a pastor after the Master's mould?'"

"And do you think, dear sir," demanded Rosa, anxiously, "you will be able to procure an introduction for me to the nephew and niece of Mr. Trench."

"I can have no doubt of it; since on my road hither I met Trench this morning, who told me, 'Captain Gore had just purchased Myrtle's Town Lodge, which had been built by Lord —— as a bathing villa for his children; and that he and Mrs. Gore were going there immediately;' upon which I mentioned a young friend here, to whom he promised the Gores should pay every attention."

"Oh, how kind, both of you and him," said the grateful Rosa. "But pray, sir, does Mrs. Gore belong to our neighbourhood?"

"No, my dear, she resided near Dublin with her mother, during the professional absence of her husband, which has been almost constant since their union, until

within the last four months; so that she is not only not our neighbour, but unknown here, the captain alone visiting his uncle, when he came down to make his purchase."

Doctor Westrop soon after departed; and notwithstanding the consolation he had given her, in the promised introduction to the relatives of Mr. Trench, he left poor Rosa with a heart filled by sorrow; inflicted by a keen wound to friendship, through his not bringing her any letter from Lady Meliora, although he had gone two miles out of the road, to Ravenswood, for that purpose; "but Lady Meliora had got a *slight* head-ache, and could not write;" and with all those barbed arrows that could wound the bosom of affection, poor Rosabella had taken her anxious station in the chamber of Antonia, when she was summoned from thence, by the arrival of Lord Derville.

This speculating votary of avarice, in defiance of the positive interdiction of his apprehensive guardian, had now ridden over to Myrtle's Town, to penetrate, if possible, what intelligence this Spanish

woman was likely to give of the probable future fortune of Rosabella, to make his observation to shape his course by.

Our heroine, surprised at receiving attention from him whom she did not expect it from, at the moment too in which she was mortified at not meeting with it from those she did, flew down stairs to greet him, with all the animated glow of her lively gratitude; which his lordship mistaking for spirits of hope's inspiration, through the auspicious promise of future greatness conveyed to her by the dying woman; received her welcome with the most careful display of affectionate joy at meeting her, and of tender interest; and ere he ceased the effusions of his meeting civilities, he announced his intention of dining with her, a declaration which he repented, when in the course of their *tête à tête* Rosa informed him, she had found cause for no expectation of amended fortune, in anything which Antonia had yet suffered to escape her.

As soon as this theme of more immediate interest to the pair who formed this *tête à*

*tête* was discussed, Rosabella inquired for his sister's head-ach.

"I did not know she had one."

"Only a slight one," said Rosa; "and yet, it prevented her fulfilling a promise of writing to me, poor victim of torturing suspense."

"Oh, as to that," replied Lord Derville, smiling, "her malady was vexation; and which too caused her omission to you no doubt. She expected Lord Montalbert to be as prompt in declaration of his captivity, as he was in yielding his heart to her fascinations; without ever once considering, that there may be some etiquette of delicacy, or honour, or Heaven knows what, to that former unfortunate attachment, which she has obliterated. And so she has taken mighty umbrage at his lordship's setting off to London, relative to some urgent business, without doing more than sending a formal farewell note to Charles; and very shortly after the receipt of this valediction, her ladyship made good her retreat to her room, to conceal her tears from our proud brother; who had read her

a famous lecture upon falling so headlong in love, before she had any encouragement for so doing, more than evident admiration of her exterior charms; and more particularly, when it was strongly suspected the poor man was smarting under a disappointment of a tender nature.

"And, upon my word, Charles spoke so eloquently, that I grieve he has not been allowed to adopt the bar for his profession; but, notwithstanding his eloquence, he not only keenly wounded the vanity of my Lady Lovesick, but put Guardy into her tantrums too; just because he unluckily mentioned you as his criterion of mental delicacy, who would not unsought be won: and so on my conscience, I think that moment the dowager took alarm, thinking he was in love with you: for instantly I perceived an interchange of wise and mysterious looks between her and that verjuice Sternham; and this morning, for what I have just been telling you occurred last evening, and this morning, lo! a plot appears on foot for separating you and her grandsons; just as if either of us should be

such blockheads, as to fall in love with a portionless girl: not but if you had money enough for my necessities, I should prefer you to any girl in existence; I should upon my soul! so you need not blush about it, Rosa; for although you never bestowed upon me one particle of encouragement, but, on the contrary, evinced on all occasions you regarded me less than any of my family; yet, had it not been for the hollow sound of your empty coffers, upon which prudence constantly has beaten the tattoo of consequences in mine ears, I should have played th d—l with my prospects, by falling in love with you an age ago."

"It has been fortunate, however, that prudence has played the part of so good a friend to us both," said Rosa, endeavouring to smile away the host of distressing sensations, his lordship's intelligence had conveyed to her bosom.

"Not fortunate to you, Rosa, in depriving you of a countess's coronet; and a d—lish good husband into the bargain."

"Yes, fortunate for me, Lord Derville, in sparing me the pang of awakening ma-

ternal distress in the bosom of my benefactress; in sparing me the pang of awakening a sensation in your bosom, which must have met its disappointment."

"Why, you young gipsy! you do not affect to mean, you would have refused me?"

"As it has been a maxim, long in recommendation, for ladies not to refuse before they are asked," returned Rosa; "I must not proclaim what sort of reception I would have given to your prudence-forbidden suit; but this much I will firmly say, that if I judge the inspirations of my heart correctly, there is no temptation I would not resist, that could, through me, inflict a pang upon the heart of my amiable, my kind, my beloved benefactress.

"But may I,—dare I,—is it proper for me to ask," continued Rosa, hesitatingly, from the emotion that agitated her bosom; "what cause you have for supposing my dear benefactress meditates sending me from her protection?"

"Oh, I'll tell you all about it. D—l a

secret I'll keep for one of them, that grim Sternham has a share in. So, my sweet Rose, last night the Dow said, 'Mrs. something Sternham,' old Wormwood's spinster sister, 'had sent through her brother a pressing invitation for you to spend some time at Pippin Grove;' or, as Charles calls it, '*Crab* Grove.'

"'And if,' says the Dow, stroking her eye-brow, as you know she always does, when she wants to humbug us into the adoption of any of her projects; 'and if any afflicting intelligence should be the result of this Spaniard's confessions, it might prove an adviseable temporary retreat for poor Rosabella; a retirement suited to the sensibility of her heart.'

"'I presume,' said Charles, with a sarcastic glance towards Mr. Sternham, 'that my sympathetic preceptor means to have the goodness to attend poor Rosabella, on her visit to Crab—I mean Pippin Grove, to aid its effects on her sensibility; and by the tropes and figures of his soothing rhetoric, in this appropriate retreat, play a

time beguiling part, and lead May to January, ere she is aware of such an unnatural junction.'

"Well, Rosa, the red flag of anger instantly unfurled over the countenances of Guardy and his reverence; but neither ventured to make any reply to Hotspur, who soon after arose from his seat, and, as he walked by Mr. Sternham on his way out, carelessly said ——

"'I really think, sir, you had better advise Lady Derville to the adoption of some other plan for the success of your projects, less formidable to Miss Frederick, than a visit to the cave of Trophonius; lest in compassion I should indeed assume the form of Cupid, and fly off with my Psyche, from the Den of Spleen, to the Bower of Delight at Gretna Green.'

"The now pale and lengthened visage of Wormwood must have sent me into a strong paroxysm of risibility, had not the ghastly hue of the Dow's countenance d—ishly alarmed me; for I thought she was going to die; and although her jointure would be a famous windfall for me, I

was boy enough to feel confoundedly sorry, and flew and opened a window, and then ran and took her in my arms; and in this my freak of interest for my grandmother, Verjuice made his retreat good; for you know he always absconds when sickness or sorrow comes athwart him; and being left *tête à tête* with Guardy, she burst into tears.—What the duce do you cry too for, Rosa?—So, so, crying in sympathy with grandam. Well, she burst into tears: but, upon my honour, not half so prettily as Rosa has done. Faith, Rosabella, I do wish, from the bottom of my heart, that your coffers were as well stored with treasures as your mind. Well, but grandam's tears I see will drown you, unless I dry them speedily, as I did hers last night, for out she sobbed —

"'Oh! Derville! if you do regard my life, as by this affectionate interest for me I believe you do, tell me, on your truth, your honour, is Charles in love with Rosabella?'

"'Is it Charles, the proud!' I exclaimed; 'No, no, that I'll be guarantee for,

my dear grandmother; unless the Spanish imp proves her of the true Hidalgo.'

"And so I ran on to comfort the poor soul, whom at length I succeeded in composing; but a new conference with that old grim mischief, I suppose, awakened suspicion again; for this morning she announced to us all, with the tell-tale accompaniment of stroking her eye-brow,

"'That, as she lay some hours upon a sleepless pillow last night, the welfare of her dear children was the theme of her anxious thoughts; and she had felt conviction, that, to make us appear with more *éclat* at the court of St. James's, we ought all to be introduced at the Irish court first; and therefore she had resolved to set out immediately to Dublin for that purpose.'

"'But,' demanded Meliora, 'how can we take Rosa away before Antonia dies?'

"'That we cannot,' replied the Dow, 'but Mrs. O'Dowd can bring her to us, when she sets out for Dublin, should Antonia have breathed her last by that time.'

"My brother's pride, rising as an aux-

iliary to this project of her ladyship's, I instantly saw, operated as a cordial soporific to her fears; but as he became more anxious for a speedy departure for Dublin, that we might be in time for the first drawing-room, my grandmother became less solicitous for the accomplishment of her project, from some twinges, I suppose, of her former apprehensions for the safety of our morals in the world of *ton*. And so I took myself off, to visit you; leaving the matter a moot point, whether former, or new fears, for the welfare of her grandsons, are to carry the day. I say, grandsons; because when I asked her had she any commands for Myrtle's town, as I was setting out to see you, she looked as much aghast, as if I had proclaimed my intention of embarking for China, and said, 'she insisted upon my not coming hither;' and then when I declared, I would not set out for Dublin without giving Rosa a parting kiss, I thought she looked even more dismayed, than when she thought Charles was ruined by your charms."

"Then, Lord Derville," exclaimed

Rosa, trembling with all the tumult of emotion his lordship's details had awakened in her bosom, "then, you cannot dine here; not for ten thousand worlds would I detain you a moment here, to add one pang to the alarms of my benefactress; for although, thank Heaven! they are unfounded, yet, as they have been introduced into her bosom, it is our duty to remove them without delay. Go therefore instantly back to Ravenswood, I implore you, Lord Derville. Show to your inestimable grandmother, that you are as anxious as your brother for your introduction at the castle of Dublin; and if you have one particle of that fraternal regard for me I trust you feel, use all your influence with my beloved Meliora, to give up the point of my accompanying her to England."

"Shall I tell her, you prefer the sweet society offered to you at Crab Grove?"

"No," said Rosa, with animated dignity. "I will not accept any invitation from the sister of a man, who thinks so ill of me as Mr. Sternham does."

"Then what will you do with yourself, for Heaven's sake?"

"I doubt not, the benevolence of my benefactress will lead her to pay for my board with Mrs. Kilbride, during your absence."

"Upon my honour!" exclaimed Lord Derville, smiling, "I think Mr. Monson and myself ought to feel most particularly flattered at your evident preference of an abode, with 'a waddling woman with a mulberry nose,' to the chance of becoming the spouse of either of us. But now really do you wish me not to dine with you?"

"Absolutely. Every moment you remain here is agonizing to me, in the confirmation it may yield to the suspicions, which have unfortunately been introduced into the bosom of my benefactress."

"I will go then, you inhospitable gipsy, if you answer me, upon your conscience, Would you so peremptorily drive Charles out of doors?"

"On my solemn word: for surely, it would

not be less culpable my aiming to draw him into a ruinous attachment, than you, Lord Derville."

"Well then, one thing more, and I am off. Give me the parting kiss I came so far for."

"As soon would I give you my parting malediction."

"Well then," said Lord Derville, laughing, as he arose to depart, "although you will give me nothing that I ask for, I must ensure you a meeting benediction from my grandam, by reporting you to her; and must content myself with a farewell pressure of the hand."

## CHAPTER X.

THE moment Lord Derville departed, Rosabella fell into a painful train of meditation upon having, although so innocently, awakened the maternal alarms of her beloved benefactress; nor could she, charitably as she felt inclined, restrain the accusations of her heart from forming themselves into an impeachment of Mr. Sternham, as the demon who had conjured up, what, she doubted not, were upon the part of Lord Derville and his brother as unsubstantial phantoms of alarm, as upon her own; since his unqualified attacks upon her prudence, his absolute avowal of his firm belief of her designs upon the heart of Mr. Monson, condemned him; and in painful conjecture she was mazed, in striving to develope the motive of Mr. Sternham's cruelty; since her conscience fully acquitted her of having given him even the shadow of offence.

But at length the noise of children playing on the strand, proclaiming low water, aroused her from her painful cogitations; and feeling, from an aching head and heavy heart, that Doctor Westrop's prescription would now prove most salutary to her, she was led into a mental debate, upon the propriety of walking out alone, where she was liable to encounter the importunate and too interesting man, whom Mr. Sternham had delineated as so worthless a member of society; a portrait, which she now began to doubt the faithfulness of; since in her own individual case he had evinced himself so capable of misapprehension, at least, if not of wilful misrepresentation; and this discredit, thrown by himself upon the evidence of her preceptor, naturally weakened her terrors of the stranger, and consequently her apprehensions of an *en passant* encounter. At length, in her conviction of the necessity she felt for air and exercise, to give her power to sustain all that might lie before her, as the ordeal appointed by Heaven for her

to pass through, she determined to sally forth and take her walk.

Rosa, soon equipped for her pedestrian task, ran down the steps to the strand; and ere her light foot-falls could make their slight impression on the sands, to her utter amazement she beheld the formidable sharper, rapidly advancing towards her with the identical Mr. Trench, so distinguished by Doctor Westrop's and Rosa's own eulogium.

The first impulse of our timid heroine was, to retreat into the house; but this a second intuitive feeling whispered would seem like puerile affectation, and be irreverent to the estimable and venerable friend of her dear bishop; whom, although she numbered not in her acquaintance, she perfectly knew by sight, as well as fame; and with glowing cheeks and bounding heart, she reluctantly proceeded towards these gentlemen, as her intended promenade directed.

A bow from the stranger Rosabella was prepared to receive; but the salutation of Mr. Trench was wholly unexpected,

and overwhelmed her with surprise; when courteously taking off his hat, as he approached her, he thus said:

"Miss Frederick, will you forgive an old man's presumption in thus introducing himself to you, whom I have long known by fame, and as long I have panted for an introduction to the youthful almoner of pity. And as this opportunity has so kindly presented itself, you will pardon, I trust, my not having found power to resist its temptation, to anticipate the good offices of your admiring friend, Doctor Westrop, who promised to obtain for my family the pleasure of your acquaintance."

Rosabella, although with the tremulous emotions of extreme timidity on addressing a stranger, yet acquitted herself with ineffable sweetness, in her grateful reception of Mr. Trench's flattering self-introduction.

"Thank you, most amiable young lady, for this kind forgiveness of a liberty so incompatible with the rules of *etiquette*," returned Mr. Trench smiling, as a tear of paternal anguish trembled in his eyes;

and as he pressed her hand with tremulous agitation at the contact; for his deeply lamented only child had been, though unknown to her, the long attached lover of Rosabella.

"This gentleman," continued Mr. Trench, resuming the arm of the stranger, and turning to walk with Rosa;—"this gentleman, Mr. Egremont, the most esteemed (because I consider him the most estimable) of my young friends, I find your active benevolence has introduced to you already; and accident never yet presented a pair to each other, so mutually meriting each other's esteem:—and as such is the case, you can neither feel cause for regret on finding you are likely often to meet at the house of Captain and Mrs. Gore, who are expected to arrive at Myrtle's Lodge to-morrow; and on the day after, I trust your *friendship* with them will commence."

Mr. Egremont, with a graceful bow, pronounced himself most happy, that, even through his own individual suffering, his long panted for introduction to Miss Fre-

derick had been accomplished. "But," he continued, with a smile as sweet as Rosa's own, "but still more happy am I, in having it proved to Miss Frederick, by such an incontrovertibly respectable witness as Mr. Trench, that I am not unworthy of claiming the honour of her acquaintance."

"And, to prove you consider me incontrovertibly respectable," said Mr. Trench smiling, "will you accompany me, Miss Frederick, in an extended walk on the sands, ere Egremont and I adjourn to our beef-steak, which we have ordered early upon my account; as I return to my rectory this evening, whilst my friend remains in possession of the Lodge, where he is come to spend some time with Gore, whose earliest and dearest friend he is."

Rosa felt, that not complying with Mr. Trench's request would appear fastidious; she therefore proceeded with him on an extended promenade; but she blushed on hearing Mr. Egremont was to remain at Myrtle's Town, and promptly determined that nothing should tempt her out to walk,

until she knew Mrs. Gore was actually arrived at the Lodge.

For more than an hour our heroine continued her promenade with her two new companions; who so beguiled time for her, by the charms of their conversation, that, with amazement she received the summons of Mrs. Kilbride, to return to dinner. Her squires expressed their surprise at this rapid flight of time, which she felt in silence; they attended her to her door, bade her adieu with evident regret; and Rosa re-entered the house, charmed to enthusiasm by both.

Our poor heroine's thoughts had too many themes, for the languor of *ennui* to steal over their action; and she arose the subsequent morning to contemplate still these subjects of hopes and fears, of pain and pleasure; but, ere she completed her first meal of the day, an express from Ravenswood brought her the following letter:—

"What will my dearly loved Rosa say, when she finds I am absolutely going to

Dublin without her? — But grandmama wills it thus disagreeably, and says, 'it would be impossible to wait the indefinite time of your necessary sojourn at Myrtle's Town, without defeating the purpose she takes this flight to the metropolis for;' so suddenly determined upon, to commence this very day at noon, that our abigails have been up the greater part of the night, packing our wardrobes.

"This rapidity of flight was not arranged until after the departure of Derville for Myrtle's Town, or he could have told you it was fixed for to-day, as well as he imparted the cause of our visiting Dublin; and then I should have had nothing to impede my expressing how sincerely I regret our leaving you, my beloved, own dear Rosa behind, and in so unpleasant a situation; but now, business must fill up the few lines time permits my writing.

"Should that lingering Antonia's last sand be run, ere Mrs. O'Dowd—who will write to inform you when the day of her

departure is fixed—sets out to join us in Dublin, you are to accompany her, the honey! 'unless,' grandmama says, 'the intelligence conveyed in Antonia's confessions should prove unpleasant communications,' which may Heaven avert! 'and then,' how provoking she is grown,—'and then, she would recommend you to continue on the same terms you now are with Mrs. Kilbride, until Mr. Sternham, who has declared off the party to England, goes down to Myrtle's Town, to escort you to Pippin Grove; whither you are most kindly invited by his sister to remain during our absence;'—'to abide the hourly shot of angry eyes,' which, if you voluntarily encounter, I shall have no pity for you.

"The messenger is now mounted, I hear, to set out with this epistle, in which I have to enclose you fifty pounds from grandmama, to supply your present demands; and to defray the expense of Antonia's funeral, which I hope may soon take place; and that nothing may intervene to prevent

your then immediately flying to the arms of my own dear Rosa's

Affectionate and unalterable friend,

MELIORA MONSON.

"I had almost forgotten to say, O'Lurcher has directions to supply you, on demand, with whatever cash you may require further.

"Charles bids me tell you, 'however he may seem to disregard you, that, should you ever require his protection, then you shall prove how true a friend he can be.'

"Only think of my scampering through so many lines without mentioning Lord Montalbert; but alas! business has torn him from me to London, leaving my only consolation, the hope of soon meeting him there. Once more, my dear Rosa, the affectionate farewell of

M. M.

"How singular, Rosa, that I shall not have occasion to change my initials, when I become Lady Montalbert; but then, as now, shall be your sincere

M. M."

As poor Rosabella read the last concluding signature, her swelling tears burst into an overflow; for now she felt as if every tie she had known upon earth was wrested from her at one direful stroke: her benefactress,—her Meliora, Charles, all, all, gone, without even an adieu; separated a fearful distance from her; and, alas! all gone for the purpose of separation from her, who would freely yield her life for the preservation of their happiness. The bank note struck painfully on her heart; for it seemed as some fatal instrument of division from those, who had won her early affection, and were all the world to her; whilst the message from Charles alarmed her with the fear of the suspicions of his grandmother not being wholly unfounded; and the postscript, relative to Mr. O'Lurcher, seemed to tell, that their separation was indeed decreed to prove a long one.

"And shall I, shall I," she mentally exclaimed, clasping her hands in anguish, and pacing her little parlour in all the

agony of keenly wounded feeling, "Shall I be doomed, in whatsoever affliction the confession of Antonia may subdue me with, to bear all without one sympathizing friend to support and console me? To behold, for the first time, the awful scene of death; to learn, even in that dreadful moment, the cruelties of a monster who bereaved my wretched mother of life; and in such scenes, in such afflictions, shall no arm be near to snatch me to a sheltering home? Oh, my benefactress! my beloved benefactress! had not your kindness been showered abundantly upon me from the hour you first took me to your protecting bosom, I should not, no, I should not, so deeply feel this cruel dereliction.

From her agony of grief Rosa was at length aroused by the entrance of Betty with a newspaper, which she delivered, "with Mr. Egremont's compliments."

"Ah! then, Miss, are not you ashamed of yourself to be ruining your eyes after this fashion?" exclaimed Betty angrily. "Was I in your place, more grief to me, if I'd be making a *bugabow* of myself, for

the absence of any of them; for myself thinks it was a mighty kind thing of them all to go prancing to Dublin without you, as Pat Carroll told me when he brought the letter: 'so now, Miss Rosa dear, be drying your eyes, and turn them upon this newspaper, which that noble looking young gentleman, our minister painted out as a rapparee, brought; and myself not knowing but 'twas true for the ould Crab, when my gentleman knocked at the door just now, I all but clapt it in his face."

"You did not, Betty, I hope," said Rosa, colouring.

"I did, Miss; and what's more, when he began to thank me so courteously for my kindness to him when he fell, I bid him hold his pilaver; upon which, thinking me mad I suppose, he drew back a little, with a mighty proud survey of me; and desired me to deliver that paper to you, 'with Mr. Egremont's compliments, who would call for it in two hours, to learn if his services could in any way be useful to you:' when, Miss, what did myself do, but snapped his nose off, and bid him

have done with his humbugs; ‘ for Sir,’ says I, ‘ it is ourselves that know you are no better than a sharper; for my lady’s chaplain has fathomed all your sly pranks.”

Rosa with difficulty could restrain her tears at such savage rudeness being the return to Mr. Egremont’s *politesse*, and Betty continued:

“ ‘ What!’ he exclaimed, going mad with the old defamer—‘ did Mr. Sternham dare to represent me to Miss Frederick as such a miscreant? But,’ continued he, with a sweet smile of quickly recovered good humour—‘ Mr. Trench has removed these false impressions of me; therefore, Mrs. Betty, you may venture to take the newspaper to Miss Frederick, to whom I am commissioned to deliver a message from Mr. Trench.’

“ So, Miss Rosa dear, being staggering in opinion, I ran in straight to you with his message; and good luck to you, jewel! tell me, is it true for him all he has been saying?”

“ Perfectly,” replied Rosa.

“ Why then ’tis ashamed of himself

Mr. Sternham ought to be," exclaimed Betty, indignantly, " to be leading me astray in this scandalous fashion. But sure, Miss, you will let Mr. Egremont in, if it was for nothing but civility to that saint Mr. Trench, and spite to *ould* Wormwood."

" Indeed," said Rosa, " I know not what to do. It will, I am conscious, prove a serious deviation from propriety admitting this man, when I am not under the protection of any one here; yet, not to receive the ambassador of Mr. Trench, would evince so much disrespect to that most amiable man, that—"

" That's what it would," exclaimed Betty, eagerly interrupting Rosa; " the highest of disrespect to a man who is Heaven's own minister here upon earth; making good men better and sinners good. And why would'nt you be letting Mr. Egremont in for his sake, dear, since I'll engage now he'll treat you for all the world as if 'twas our venerable queen he had in it?"

" I think," replied Rosa, " I will be

in Antonia's room, when we may begin to expect his promised call, that you may tell him I am with the sick person, who occasions my being here, but that you doubt not she can spare me for five minutes to learn the message he so kindly brings me from Mr. Trench; and thus, Betty, you can intimate to him a limit for his stay."

"That will be mighty clever, jewel! and I'll be bail now he'll be taking the hint," Betty replied, with an arch smile.

At length, Mr. Egremont was announced by Betty; and the timid Rosa, apprehensive of the impropriety of admitting him, proceeded with fear and trembling to her little parlour, to receive him who met her with all that profound homage of respect which Betty had predicted, "thanked her for her goodness in honouring him with an audience, after having been so prejudiced against him, even although it was only as the delegate of Mr. Trench; who had sent a request by him, that she would have the goodness to accept some fruit, which would be daily sent for her

invalide from a friend of Mr. Trench's, whose gardener had received directions to that purpose."

Our blushing heroine gracefully spoke her acknowledgments for this kindness; nor could the polite attentions of Mr. Egremont himself fail of drawing forth the respondence of urbanity, which led her, although unwillingly, to ask him to be seated, when to her infinite chagrin, he instantly complied; and to her further embarrassment, she perceived his intention of departing farther and farther from his thoughts as moments passed away; notwithstanding her frequently reverting to the invalide under her care, "whom the caprice of sickness rendered miserable if she remained more than a *few* moments absent."

But this appeal to the humanity of her visitor operating with no success, Rosa endeavoured as ineffectually to awaken alarm for himself, by predicting rain at least a dozen times; and with as little efficacy as frequently reverted to the momentarily expected arrival of Captain

and Mrs. Gore, conceiving the demands of friendship ought to summon him away; but all was disregarded, since Egremont remained a determined fixture for full two hours. His conversation, so fascinating in its variety, evincing a happy blending of intellect, profound information, perfect knowledge of not only men and manners, but of all the countries of Europe, that Rosa would have been enchanted by the magic of his captivating powers, had not her conviction of the impropriety of such a long protracted *tête-à-tête* haunted her imagination to counteract the spell.

In the small proportion which timidity allowed our heroine to bear in this conversation she ventured to inquire, "if Mrs. Gore was an amiable and pleasing woman?"

"I can give no opinion of my own," he replied, "as I am yet a stranger to Mrs. Gore; but from Mr. Trench's account of her, I may pronounce her neither. Gore, fascinated by her transcendent beauty, unfortunately thought not of those qualifications that only could in-

sure his connubial happiness: whilst she, affecting to despise that which had captivated him, chooses to present herself to the world as a woman whose intellect far out-soars her beauty; but in this unlucky pretension she only commits herself as an absurd self-deluder. In her showy accomplishments she has evinced talent, having arrived in them to a height of excellence, which few but professors ever toil to attain, having devoted every hour of her husband's professional absence to their improvement. And even now, in her mania for super-excellence in these attractive pursuits, she withdraws herself almost totally from the society of poor Gore, whose soul is perfectly attuned to domestic enjoyment; and who, finding himself so grievously disappointed in the rationality of the connubial companion he selected, visited St. Leonard's rectory a short time since, to consult his uncle upon the best means to adopt for luring her from this absorption in minor acquirements, to those studies which may yield her some pretence to the assumption of

the intellectual treasures she affects, and allow her poor husband more of her society.

"The purchase of Myrtle Lodge," continued Egremont, "was the consequence of Mr. Trench's advice, who believes nothing so likely to subdue this mania for the destruction of domestic comfort as the shade of retirement; where that incense, which feeds the flame of her ruling passion, must be extinguished by the absence of admiration from the adulating multitude, for which Mrs. Gore has so indefatigably toiled; and the plea for the purchase of this marine cottage being the health of their only child, she has not ventured to demur."

At length, the intruding effluvia of culinary preparations from the approximate kitchen intimated to Mr. Egremont, that the moment of inevitable departure was absolutely arrived; and with lingering, visible reluctance he arose to go, and as he did so said:

"Under the auspices of Mrs. Gore's presence, I trust, I may not in future

prove so embarrassing, and consequently, I fear, unpleasant a companion, as the artlessness of Miss Frederick betrayed her having this day found me;" and, with a mournful smile, expressive of more than common regret, he bade farewell to Rosabella.

The moment Betty had ushered Mr. Egremont to the causeway, she entered the parlour with a basket of choice fruit, which had just arrived "with Mr. Trench's compliments."

"And if it was not luck that sent this elegant fruit, jewel, I wonder what is luck!" said Betty, "since sorrow morsel else, Mrs. Kilbride says, will you have for your dinner dear, in regard to Mr. Egremont—the sojourner! overdoing the whole tote. The chicken he boiled to rags, and the soles he fried the life out of; so that Mrs. Kilbride at last was forced to bring the frying-pan to the key-hole, just cutely to give him the sense to go."

"Indeed," said Rosabella, blushing, "he staid a great deal too long, which I wonder very much at his doing, Betty,

and although possessing a more than common portion of good sense, it was mere plain sense; yet of that acute and decisive cast most useful in his profession, and as a fund for the demands of life. His heart, attuned to all the social virtues, found no cloud to their indulgence from unpropitious fortune, since an ample paternal inheritance, and great success in the most honourable pursuit of his profession, enabled him unhesitatingly to extend his hand, "open as day, to melting charity;" and to yield the smile of welcome to all who merited reception at his hospitable board.

The benevolence of Captain Gore's heart would at once have taught him, to feel interest for Rosabella in her present insulated situation, had no other cause awakened that sensation; and Mrs. Gore, having heard Mr. Trench, at whose house she slept on her journey to Myrtle's Town, speak of Miss Frederick as a woman of surpassing intellect, had prepared herself to find in her a kindred soul: but not

exactly in kindred sympathy she found their attire and manners; for in the one, although Rosabella's garb presented no one thing indicative of affluence, yet all combined, struck as the perfection of neatness and good taste: while in the other, there was every charm to please and to allure; and from this obvious dissimilitude Mrs. Gore mentally pronounced, that our heroine could not in possibility be so profound in erudition as herself.

After the meeting civilities of this small party had terminated, Mrs. Gore affectedly exclaimed:

"What a lowering day! You know one must condescend to canvass the weather upon first introduction,—since one cannot go dash at once into the discussion of literature; it would seem so affected;—such a display! And yet, what a sacrifice of time when descending to any other subject!"

"Are you weather-wise, Miss Frederick?" demanded Captain Gore eagerly, whilst a transient glow passed over his

intelligent countenance,—" for, as Mrs. Gore announces our impelled topic, pray let us promptly enter upon it, that I may alarm you into taking shelter in a safer port than this exposed dwelling, which, from its insubstantial formation, must rock alarmingly in a gale. I hope you are tremblingly alive to every fear in a storm, that I may terrify you by my prognostics into shifting your station to Myrtle Lodge, which must prove a more comfortable habitation for you; yet still will be sufficiently near, to admit of your easily visiting this sick woman you are so humanely attending."

Rosa made her grateful acknowledgments, with her excuses for not complying with so very kind an invitation; since the apothecary had but just informed her, " he feared the last moments of the poor invalide were rapidly approaching."

" That is the very reason," said Egremont anxiously, " that you should remove from a scene so distressing to your feeling heart."

" Oh, no," she replied, " I must not

go. There are arbitrary reasons, Mr. Egremont, to command my stay."

"But do not attend to them, I importune you, Miss Frederick," said Mrs. Gore; "for it will be full as benevolent in you to come and beguile my time for me at that uninteresting, unclassically erected Lodge, before the arrival of my library, and mathematical, and astronomical, and musical instruments; when I shall be so grateful to you for your aid in unpacking all—for I always attend to those important matters myself; and then we shall be such enchantingly appropriate companions, discussing science and literature, whilst arranging my precious stores."

"My dear Honour," said Captain Gore, "cease to importune Miss Frederick upon the subject. You see it distresses her to refuse almost as much as it would to comply."

"Honour!" exclaimed Mrs. Gore, shuddering. "How you do annoy me, Horace, with that odious name! You, who were fortunate in a classical sponsor,

ought to commiserate me, and not appal me with so tame and illiterate an appellation."

Captain Gore, with a bright suffusion of cheeks, started from his seat to the window, declaring, "there was so sudden a swell at sea, he augured a coming storm; and as he thought there was heavy rain approaching, they had better steer their course homeward; and on the morrow, when more auspicious weather might be hoped for, he trusted Miss Frederick would make arrangements for the care of the invalide, which might enable her, without pain to her compassionate heart, to give them the pleasure of her company at dinner, when he should have the gratification of introducing his child to her."

"La, Horace!" Mrs. Gore exclaimed, "Miss Frederick, I doubt not, would rather be excused from such an unprofitable introduction. Single women of great literary acquirements never patronize brats. They will not spare that time from their pursuits, which, alas! we mothers must through duty contrive to sacrifice.

Her husband heaved an audible sigh from the centre of his heart, and Rosabella, distressed beyond measure, scarcely knew what reply to make, that might not seem to censure Mrs. Gore; whilst not to answer must appear, she feared, at once the arrogant assumption of all this absurd woman and unnatural parent had ascribed to her; and after a momentary hesitation, she said:

"Fortunately for a strong propensity of mine, I possess no literary acquirements to impede my patronage of children, whom, if engaging ones, I ever feel a spirit of juvenility arising within me, that persuades me at once I am a suitable playmate for."

"Ah, well," said Mrs. Gore smiling, as she arose to depart, "I will suffer your sportive sallies with Nelson until the arrival of my treasures; but now, dear Miss Frederick, as this threatening husband of mine is hurring me away on the wings of his hurried predictions, I must not postpone importuning for a cheering promise from you of dining with us to-

morrow; and also, for your coming to us the moment this good woman departs for Elysium. I shall have a well-aired bed in a cheerful chamber ready for you at a moment's notice; and a sincere welcome I trust you feel assured of."

Captain Gore caught his wife's hand, and drew it with a tender pressure to rest upon his arm, as Rosabella made her acknowledgments with the most animated gratitude for their kindness.

"My panting wish to have you beneath the same roof with me," said Egremont, lingering a moment after his companions, "makes me almost inhuman—if longing for the release from suffering of the poor woman, who so confines and interests you, is inhumanity."

"I fear," replied Rosabella, brightly blushing at the import of deep interest this speech betrayed; "I fear her last sand is running down, and therefore, I also fear, I did very wrong in promising to dine with Captain and Mrs. Gore to-morrow."

"No," said Egremont, in a voice soft-

ening to the most thrilling tenderness. "You did not do wrong; you never mean to do wrong, Miss Frederick; and to-morrow, should your invalide become worse —should you find any reason for the retraction of your promise, impart all your wishes to me, who will call here in the morning for that purpose; and will convey them faithfully to Gore, who will, I know, comply with them in whatsoever manner is most conducive to your comfort."

"Oh, how good, how very good you are to me!" said Rosa, in a tone melted by gratitude.

Egremont, through a resistless impulse, caught her hand and pressed it with fervour, yet with profound homage to his lips; when Rosa hastily and gravely withdrew it from his grasp, and rapidly wishing him good morning retreated from his ardent gaze, and stationed herself by the pillow of Antonia, whose final scene Mr. Farrell believed was drawing near; and in this her anxious vigil, Rosa strenuously endeavoured to call up all the forces of her

mind in readiness, to sustain her through the approaching awful conflict; yet even in this state of solemn expectation, still she found her truant thoughts would often stray to a wandering question, of "why, Mr. Egremont should wish her beneath the same roof with him? why he expressed such interest for her? why his voice had assumed such melting tones in his last address to her? and why he had snatched her hand as if he could not help it?"

The gale, which Captain Gore had predicted, came on with rapidity; and ere the dinner hour of Rosa, had arisen to violence which shook the windows of the house with fury, and made the unsubstantial fabric rock to the mournful howl of its whistling vehemence; inspiring the dying Antonia with such evident terror, that our compassionate heroine felt it would be cruelty to leave her, to go to her repast, and therefore made a hasty and comfortless meal in one corner of the chamber.

Shortly after the almost nominal dinner

of our heroine, Father O'Flanagan called to comfort the occupants of his brother's rocking hobby, by positive assurance of the safety of their dwelling, "the vibration of which was guarantee for its perfect architecture; for that his brother, the most ingenious artificer in the whole province, prided himself on the plan of that row of houses, every stone of which he had helped to pile."

"But although the consolation of Father O'Flanagan operated in lulling the terrors of Rosabella and her companions, it was unknown at Myrtle Lodge; and in all the alarm and interest awakened for our heroine in her dangerous situation, Captain Gore and his friend arrived about seven o'clock, to remove the inhabitants to the Lodge, if appearances should call for such a measure.

It was some time ere the howling of the storm permitted their loud knocks to be heard in the apartment of Antonia; but when they were so, and that Mrs. Kilbride descended in trepidation, and discovered who the intruders were, and

learned the motive of their coming, without the impediment of ceremony she ushered them at once to the dying woman's chamber.

"Which is all the chance *yez* have in life, gentlemen," she said, "to be seeing that saint, Miss Rosy; for there herself is stuck like the sweet garland by the grave; having promised never at all at all, to be leaving her ould kidnapper, until the breath will be defunct in her."

Rosabella, although individually gratified by the kind interest evinced by this visit, yet experienced extreme alarm for its effect upon Antonia; but the dying penitent dozed on unconscious of their presence, who considerately lowered their voices to the tones of cautious whispers.

But the awful scene of the chamber of expected death—its solemn stillness, only interrupted by the mournful murmurs of the ungovernable wind, the furious roaring of the raging billows,—the white foam of which, with the beating rain, washed and shook the windows of the room through which the pale blue

lightning flashed, as the harbinger of tremendous peals of thunder,—impressed both gentlemen with such sympathy for the feelings of the gentle Rosa, that earnestly they implored her "instantly to quit the premises, and allow them to have Antonia carefully removed to some safe contiguous dwelling."

But to this proposition of comfort Rosabella was compelled to utter a firm, although grateful negative, since Mr. Farrell had positively forbidden such a measure; even pronouncing, when she suggested the idea to him, "such a measure deliberate murder, through the instant death such an attempt would effect." But to lull their apprehensions for her safety, she recapitulated for them all the positive assurances of security Father O'Flanagan had consoled them with.

"The reverend Father ought certainly to be acquainted with the security of his brother's architecture," said Captain Gore; "but still, I cannot be satisfied at your remaining in such a scene of peril, as this apparently presents; and although

this worthy pastor affirms, 'the sea in the most tremendous tempests Myrtle's Town has been visited by, since the erection of this fabric, has never done more than overflowed the causeway;' I cannot subscribe to his opinion of safety; for since the spray washes the windows of this chamber now, you must inevitably expect the more tremendous visits of the foaming billows themselves, at high water, —four in the morning—an awful hour of helplessness!"

"Rosa,—Miss Frederick!" exclaimed Egremont, in a tone of agonized alarm, "you must not, shall not remain here, exposed to such tremendous peril; even the inspirations of duty must lose their power at the imperious command of self-preservation."

"Perhaps, ere the period of threatening peril arrives," said Rosabella blushing, as she smiled her gratitude for such flattering interest in her fate, "Antonia may have breathed her last; and then, believe me, I shall be most anxious to seek the asylum, so kindly offered to me."

Captain Gore, who, in his anxiety to observe the course of this active storm, had been gazing eagerly through a window, whilst his friend and our heroine had been speaking, perceiving some appearance, which seemed to augur an abatement of the elemental violence, requested to go up to the attic, where he might open a sash, and make more certain observations. Accordingly he did so, and returned with the cheering information, "that all was tranquillizing."

"But still we will remain here until we see your prediction realized," said Egremont eagerly.

They did remain, and minute after minute appeared to add probability to the augury of Captain Gore; since each gust of wind seemed to exhaust the power of its successor; the spray decreased in its assaults, the thunder became more distant, the lightning less alarming, and the house ceased to announce itself the cradle of insecurity; and from this auspicious change, the females of this air-built structure acquiring more courage,

Mrs. Kilbride resumed her recollection of the part she long had played of hostess, descended to the kitchen, and soon returned with a tray of that refreshing beverage—tea.

"But Mrs. Kilbride," said Egremont, as he was taking tea from her, "although our present apprehensions seem to promise an auspicious termination; yet, in case of future peril, I trust you are provided with prompt means of escape through the rear of this alarming building."

"Sure sorrow rear the building has, your honour," she replied.

"Why surely, as the house has a front, it must have a back," said Gore.

"Faith, and you may say that, Sir: but where's the use there is in the humbug, when 'tis all the world like the back of a prison, affording no means for escape. And why would it, your honour? for did not O'Flanagan erect these tinminits without so much as onst remembering the gardens he marked out to be having for them were another man's property? and

that he must be after buying them, before they would be his own? Well, your honours, as his luck would have it, the owner was a crab, and an ould negur to boot; who, the moment ever she seen the tinimints were roofed in, and that Teague O'Flanagan wouldn't do widout her ground, what does she do but axes him double the worth of it. Ah, then, what do I say? twinty times its value; and then, whin it was into a passion he kindled with her—and why wouldn't he go mad in regard to the imposition? and calt her 'an ould cheat;' not one morsel of the ground would she be selling him, let alone the whole lot; so sorrow back door have ourselves, but what is in the front into the airy, under the parlour: and although we have our compliment of windows at the rear, 'tis not much use for escape they are of, since the one in the kitchen won't open good or bad, kease the ould crab made a pig-sty under it, as a nosegay for Teague O'Flanagan's tinants; and that to Miss Rosy's room never had pullies, for fear it would open to

murder the gentry with the perfumes; but sorrow much matter is that same, for would they open as glibly as the ould divil's clapper, not a ladder would herself allow on her premises, set in case 'twas from fire we wanted to escape, in respect to her heavy hatred to O'Flanagan."

Until nine o'clock Captain Gore and his still more anxious friend remained with Rosa, to obtain conviction of her safety, ere they should venture to leave her; but as at that time the storm had so considerably subsided, and as the appearance of the elements fully sanctioned the belief of all being hushed by midnight to tranquil repose, they departed; and even then with evident reluctance upon the part of Egremont, who however felt the necessity of the measure, not only for the comfort of the dying Antonia, but through propriety, now threatened peril no longer sanctioned his remaining with our heroine.

## CHAPTER XII.

The terrors of the storm from its commencement had so distressing an effect upon the shattered nerves of Antonia, that Mr. Farrell had judged it necessary to send her a powerful anodyne; for now, as her stream of life was ebbing fast to the ocean of inevitable mortality, it was no longer requisite to adhere to that regimen, which might have repelled the disease she was subdued by, ere all hope was over. To yield ease and comfort to her last moments was all that could now be attended to; and united to her evident disposition to sleep through the latter part of the evening, the cordial effect of her medicine soon consigned her to a tranquil slumber.

Our heroine, with the sanguine expectations of eighteen, began to cherish every flattering hope of renovation of faculty at least, if not of ultimate recovery from this profound and apparently salutary repose,

with which the elements now seemed in unison; for, as Captain Gore had predicted, by midnight every boisterous agitation was hushed to the most perfect tranquillity: the boats, which had been labouring in the gale without a possibility of making for home, now after toil and peril sailed calmly in to shore; the agonized wife and mother now were cheered by the safety of those they believed for ever lost to them; the exhausted, half drowned fisherman was cheered by fondly welcoming affection, by the blaze of his turf fire, and by the humble comforts of his well-loved home.

Since the slumber of Antonia seemed as likely to endure as the tranquillity of the winds and waves, our heroine was prevailed upon by her companions, to throw herself upon her bed about one o'clock; from whence Betty, whose nocturnal watch it was, could instantly summon her on the awaking of Antonia; and scarcely had she retired, when she sunk into a gentle slumber.

Mrs. Kilbride through fatigue, from

having performed the wakeful nurse to Antonia the preceding night, had gladly retired to her attic, where soon through her nasal organ she loudly sounded her employment; and Betty, infected by the general soporifick influence, napped most industriously in her chair for about two hours; when, in dire terror, she and Rosabella were aroused by a sudden burst of thunder over their dwelling, which seemed as if about to shake the globe from its centre, and rolled its terrific clang ere the pale flame that preceded it had vanished.

This appalling crash was but the preceding one of an incessant roll of Heaven's tremendous artillery; and this awful cannonade came with the renewal of every accompaniment to alarm. The clouds had burst in torrents of rain, the wind in ungovernable fury raged, and the sea in equal tumult foamed and swelled, menacing destruction in its headlong prowess, even to the very rocks that dared to bound its impetuous power.

The thunder, wind, and sea, in com-

bination most horrible, shook the tottering fabric with the portentous vibration that menaced overthrow. The surf, with its white foam, washing the windows at each infuriated return of the now mountainous billows, informed the tremblers within how near destruction was approaching. To supplicate for aid, but from the Supreme, was precluded from their possibility, since the doors of their dwelling were alike blocked and assaulted by the invincible foe that threatened annihilation; they could open no windows at the rear, and if they could, their voices, even in the wild shriek of despair, must be lost in the elemental furies which dinned around them.

To pray for aid was all they had power to effect; but ere they sunk on their knees, in full belief that even the mercy of Heaven was not now for them, Betty, like a frantic being, rushed up to Mrs. Kilbride, to arouse her to come and unite in their prayers, while the trembling Rosa remained below; but still in this moment of appalling horror remembering the dictates

of pity, resolved not to allow Antonia to be awakened, to spare her if possible the terrors of the scene preceding their destruction.

The dismay of Mrs. Kilbride seemed at once to chase the influence of reason, and shrieking wildly she descended, when her incessant frantic cries effected what the jarring winds had failed to do, for she awoke Antonia: and now every effort of our heroine's to pray proved ineffectual, for she seized her hand with the firm grasp that told not the feebleness of approaching death, and she howled her terror in the most dismaying tones; and making vehement attempts at utterance appalling to hear, but nothing could she articulate.

This conflict of terror was not doomed to linger, ere it came to its dire crisis.—The foaming surges, after shocks which seemed about to hurl the building from its basis, with impetuous fury smashed every pane of glass in the front of this devoted house; and in the next return of its raging assaults the window frames were burst in with a monstrous crash, which was echoed

by the direful shrieks of the hopeless victims within.

The inundation of water, and current of winds now admitted, extinguished the candles; but the dawn of this dread morning, although struggling to appear through an almost impenetrable gloom, yet afforded gleam sufficient to perceive the horrors of that destruction, which to the conviction of all was inevitable, and only suspended until the next tremendous return of the resistless breakers. This was waited for in a state of breathless horror, which even the most expressive pen must fail in the delineation of;—since what language could portray the feelings of those who beheld destruction so near, so awful, so irremediable; who saw as it were their vessel risen from its stay, and knew at the next swell of the never slumbering tide, or its successor, they must be launched into the gulf of eternity?

In this moment of expected death, the impetuous foe returned with accumulated force for its destructive prowess; and flowing into each story, at its rending reflux

bore with it the whole front of the wrecked house, completely disengaged from its side walls; and with this dissevered part of the building was mercilessly borne away the tin-box, containing the confession of Antonia, with every clew to our heroine's family; along with every article of buoyant weight, that had come within its impetuous course.

Rosabella saw this long panted for treasure borne away with the apathy of one forlorn of earthly hope; whose every thought was eagerly concentrating to the firmly expected mercy from her Creator and Redeemer upon her pure spirit, to be summoned in the next resistless sweep to the regions of eternity.

Antonia too beheld the loss of that she had seemed for the last few days only to live to guard; but not with the indifference the soaring Rosabella, raised from all mundane anxieties, evinced for its deprivation; for on the instant she fell into one of the strongest fits she had ever been assailed by; while the hopeless beings, who now beheld her, possessed neither power nor

means to afford her aid:—but this struggle was too violent to sustain; her expiring groans were heard as the returning billows came to bear her on her bed, to seek her awful cemetery in the fathomless caverns of the deep.

That first impulse of human nature, operating for self-preservation, now urged the precipitate retreat of the trembling and dismayed trio into the inner room; where, from intuitive obedience to this resistless law, Betty closed the door of their asylum; and with that strength imparted by terror placed a chest of drawers across it, to fortify it against the impetuous fury of the billows.

This effort seemed to recall the faculties of Mrs. Kilbride to rationality; she ceased her wild shrieks of despair, and calling for the aid of her companions, commenced the attempt of raising the sash, which from being destitute of facilities to its movement, they found an effort almost defying mortal strength; but strength beyond that of mortal feebleness was imparted to them:—they achieved the raising of the

sash, and the next essay of Mrs. Kilbride's renovated self-possession was, the determination of tying Rosa's sheets together, and then to the bed-post, to form a method of descent; but, alas! the bedstead they now remembered was a canopy one, bearing no pillars or any stay to effect the purpose they required. In vain they looked around for some substitute to afford them the means of escape; the swelling waves, rushing with augmenting violence against the door and partition of their insecure retreat, increasing their despair. And now assured that destruction must soon inevitably burst its way to overwhelm them, they sunk again on their knees; Mrs. Kilbride and Betty, to supplicate for succour, and Rosa, to consign her soul to the mercy of Him, who had given her life, and whose will it now was to take it from her.

But from these supplications of fervent devotion they were all aroused by something like the sound of human voices from beneath the window, yet which the raging of the elements prevented their distinctly

ascertaining; but ere they had time to arise from their knees, hope was restored to them, on beholding a ladder raised.

This unequivocal restoration of human nature's balmy soother now brought with it the enervating influence of sudden joy to Mrs. Kilbride and Betty, who neither now found power to move; but Rosabella sprung at once from her suppliant position, and as spontaneously sunk to it again; for to breathe her solemn fervent thanks for that rescue, which now appeared in promise, was the impulsive inspiration of her pious heart.

Almost in the moment after the fixing of the ladder, a man appeared at the window, whose calls for Rosa, delivered in tones expressive of agonized solicitude, agitated our heroine with a tumult of sensations to herself undefinable; since these exclamations of tender anxiety were sounded in the melodious voice of Egremont.

Betty and Mrs. Kilbride now bounded to the window, and implored Mr. Egre-

[illegible] with almost frantic supplications [illegible]

"[illegible] my honour," he replied, "I will [illegible] and every one in my power [illegible] the moment my agonizing fears [illegible] the preservation of Miss Frederick [illegible] terminated. But where, oh! where [illegible] Rosa, Rosa, come to me, I implore you, and support me, by delay, my [illegible] I may run to it."

The [illegible] the trembling Rosabella, [illegible] with difficulty made her way to the [illegible] and sat upon the sofa, when she was instantly and tenderly aided by [illegible] in her usual manner, which [illegible] of the surgery, mentioned by [illegible] and as Egremont could [illegible] the deep agony of his tender [illegible] to the care of Captain Gore, [illegible] at the foot of the [illegible] assuming with perfect com- [illegible] the feelings and threatenings [illegible] of the ground they had tres- [illegible] for this benevolent rescue,) [illegible] John his promise to those

still in peril; Mrs. Kilbride and Betty were seen in rapid descent, awakening fears of the most serious nature for their safety; but contrary to general expectation, they preserved their footing and arrived at the bottom unhurt, except from those bruises, they, as well as Rosa, had sustained from the angry surges.

Rosabella still trembling from all the agitating conflicts of emotion the late scene of horrors she had so miraculously escaped from had awakened, and shivering from wet drapery, became again the object of Egremont's ardent solicitude; and with eager speed he hurried her over the enclosure of the old beldam's premises into the street, to secure her from the summary vengeance of the enraged landholder; who although still assuring them she would prosecute them as housebreakers, stealing into her pig-sty, had brought to the window she was scolding from a large kish of potatoes, which she was converting into missile weapons to pelt the rescuers and the rescued from her ground.

Egremont now anxiously, yet tenderly, hurried Rosa still on, that she might arrive at the lodge in time to have every precaution taken to counteract the peril she still was menaced by; but impeded by the tremulous walk of our poor heroine, they did not reach the lodge, until Gore had overtaken them.

They found Mrs. Gore up, but overpowered by terror at the storm, and apprehension for the danger which might possibly assail her husband in his knight-errantry, which she thought he might have left solely to his evidently enamoured friend,—the domesticks, whom duty led, and the mercenaries whom interest prompted to aid him; but as Gore was now returned in safety, she forgave him the alarm she had experienced on his account; and could receive our heroine with kind commiseration.

A bed had already been prepared for Rosa, as the Gores expected her for a guest as soon as Antonia should breathe her last; and every moment she was now delayed from it, inflicted agonies upon the

heart of Egremont, in the apprehension of fatal consequences; Mrs. Gore therefore kindly led her to her room, but thought not of the necessity of administering any preventive to cold, or specific to lull the agitation of her evidently affected nerves; luckily however, the two friends possessed that forethought; and Gore saw that all things proper were sent up to her.

Betty, as the attendant of Miss Frederick, was invited by Gore to the lodge; and she through his benevolent care had those preventives prepared for her, his kindness judged necessary, to preserve the blessing health to her who had her subsistence to earn. Mrs. Kilbride too he had desired to come and take shelter in his house; but she preferred an asylum in the cabin of a neighbour contiguous to the wrecked dwelling, that she might be at hand, she said, "should the sea make restitution, to seize upon all she could swear to as her own property."

"Though upon my conscience, Sir," she said, "'tis my thumb I must be kiss-

ing, if I take my book oath on that barren subject, in regard to not having a morsel of property, at all at all, excepting a varlet of a husband who tuck every tatter I possessed. But what I mane, your honour, about the property is, that it is the quear fashing here, to be claiming all the say takes into its clapper claws, as public property; it is 'catch cat, catch can;' and myself being as good a mouser that way, as the best of them, I will be clawing up all that jewel of a child's property that comes widin my scent, or near my clutches."

## CHAPTER XIII.

When after, a few hours' slumber, the family of Myrtle Lodge arose from their pillows, it was found, that neither Miss Frederick nor her maid could leave their beds; for the fatigue they had before endured in attendance upon Antonia, the terror, the cold, the bruises they had sustained, subdued them both with a degree of fever, that deprived them of the power of rising; and poor Rosabella's indisposition found a potent auxiliary in her mental suffering; for now her existence was no longer imperiled, the loss of Antonia's confession struck direfully on her peace; now her affectionate heart's fondly cherished expectation of being restored to a mother's arms was cruelly blighted; every hope of discovering to whom she belonged, or of claiming kindred with an

honourable and deserving brother, wrested from her for ever.

Mrs. Kilbride was also confined by cold and bruises to her bed, at which she loudly murmured, as it prevented her attendance upon the returning tide, "to claw up the child's property, would any come back from the clutches of the deep."

Through the humane attention of Egremont and Captain Gore, the body of Antonia was sought for miles along the coast, but was not washed up until the succeeding evening's tide, when at the expense of the former it received the rite of interment.

As in less than twenty minutes after the providential rescue of Rosa and her companions, the whole of the house they had escaped from, with the others in the row, had been swept away, nearly all the clothes which our heroine and Betty Roach had brought to Myrtle's Town were lost in the general wreck; they therefore were compelled to send to Mrs. Jollybrand, the housekeeper at Ravenswood, for a fresh supply; which arriving ere poor Rosabella

was able to quit her bed, prevented the necessity of her long trespassing upon the kindness of Mrs. Gore, for assistance to her wardrobe.

As Doctor Westrop was immediately summoned to our heroine, she had every prompt aid that a skilful physician could yield; whilst every other essential for the comfort and alleviation of sickness, Captain Gore took care she should be supplied with. Yet it was two whole days ere she could quit her bed; and two more ere she was sufficiently recovered to leave her chamber; and even then, it was an exertion more than her mental maladies could well endure. But she felt it as her duty to these kind strangers, who not only preserved her life at some peril to their own, but were treating her with every benevolent attention, not to prolong the trouble and inconvenience her indisposition must occasion one moment longer than absolute inability to join the family circle required; she therefore summoned her fortitude to conquer the effect of her cruel disappointment, to allow her to appear.

Captain Gore had visited Rosabella in her dressing-room, the second day of her removal thither, and received her grateful acknowledgments for all his kindness to her; but although Egremont would have given a thousand worlds to be admitted too, yet as Mrs. Gore had not proposed it, he concluded it would be incorrect, and therefore made no effort to obtain his ardent wish.

But on the subsequent day, his panting heart was gratified; he beheld the pale and languid, yet interestingly lovely Rosa, seated in an easy chair in the morning room of Mrs. Gore; and to his further gratification, she was totally alone there; when thrown completely into the guidance of his feelings by the tumultuous emotions of his bosom, on seeing her there in perfect safety after all the direful perils she had been encompassed by; and as he presented himself before her, he took both her hands, and in the wild tumult of his now ungovernable joy, he pressed them to his lips—to his heart, exclaiming—

"O Rosa! dare I confess to you?—

Will you pardon my presumption, if I tell the source of that excess of joy, which almost overpowers my senses, on beholding you in safety?"

"I should rejoice on beholding you, Mr. Egremont," replied the blushing, trembling Rosabella, faltering in articulation through a variety of emotions, "did I possess the power of making the acknowledgments of my deeply penetrated gratitude as I could wish."

"Believe me," said Egremont, seating himself beside her, "believe me, you owe me no acknowledgment of gratitude, Miss Frederick; since all that you conceive demands your thanks was dictated by a selfish motive. It was to preserve my own happiness, Rosa, I sought to rescue you from the peril that encompassed you; for had you perished, my sun of earthly bliss had then indeed been set for ever; since you are the being on whom the tenderest affections of my heart are riveted. You are the being, whom I fondly hope my auspicious destiny will influence, to listen to my ardent suit, and lead to my arms, as

the wife of my bosom, the chosen of my heart, the pride of my fancy,—the sterling stamp of my unerring judgment."

Rosabella, who had never been addressed in the language of love before, and who had been reared almost in the belief she never should; now heard this sudden, and most unexpected declaration, so unequivocally made, with a degree of astonishment, that for a moment suspended the other powerful emotions, which it awakened; but promptly they reunited; and in the perceptible agitation they inspired, she endeavoured to articulate a reply,—since one she supposed was necessary. Yet every word she gave utterance to she wished recalled, for nothing was connected, nothing intelligible, but her terming the declaration of Mr. Egremont mere *badinage*, as it must be an impossibility to form a serious attachment to an individual, too little known to him for his judgment to have formed any clear estimate of her merit.

"No, Miss Frederick, on the faith of an onourable man, my declaration is not

*badinage,*" Egremont solemnly replied, as he enraptured contemplated the evident embarrassments of her genuine timidity. "My attachment is not to an individual I know too little of, justly to appreciate; for six months have now elapsed, since my heart imbibed an anxiety to become the ready captive of your reported mental treasures: five months have passed since my fascinated fancy taught me the adoration of your matchless beauty; and in all that painful lapse of time, marked by the endurance of a passion consuming my own peace, yet making no advance, even in prospect, toward winning a reciprocity of attachment; for still was I doomed to meet the constant overthrow of all my anxious plans for obtaining an introduction at Ravenswood, to plead my suit to the lovely child of excellence I adored: and even when led by your humanity to a conference with Mr. Sternham, and when with ingenuousness I imparted to him my hopes, my wishes, relative to you, and importuned him to become my advocate with Lady Derville for my admission

at Ravenswood; he repelled me with the torturing information of her ladyship's having other views for you in an alliance with one of her own family. But soon after I found reason to believe, the reverend gentleman, lapsing from recollection of the sacred character of his function, was deceiving me; and on your disappearance from Ravenswood, promptly discovering whither you were gone, I, in all the fond—the flattering hope of ceasing to be the proscribed being you had been taught to—"

To the infinite relief of Rosa, and chagrin of Egremont, Mrs. Gore now made her appearance, and interrupted a *tête à tête*, that overpowered our heroine with emotions new, and to her almost undefinable; but the most prominent, for this day at least, seemed amazement: since Egremont professing an unalterable attachment to her;—thinking of wooing her in seriousness;—and above all, announcing his fancy to have been captivated by her beauty, filled her bosom with the most genuine astonishment; and she, who had

been taught from childhood to believe she possessed no personal attractions, to whom the voice of admiration had never before sounded, except indeed from a few of Lady Anne Belmont's visitors, and in a late sudden impulse of *badinage* from Mr. Monson, repeatedly asked herself in mental doubt, "Could this be possible? Could Mr. Egremont really love her? Could he, so transcendently handsome and fascinating as he was, could he think seriously of her, who was gifted with no pretensions for the captivation of any man but some poor tasteless curate, who might require an industrious helpmate?" And the more Rosabella contemplated the amazing subject, the more powerful her astonishment became; and in proportion her fears augmented, lest she had deceived herself, through her ignorance of such matters, in the definition she had given to what he had so seriously uttered.

But these alarming fears, as often as they recurred, soon met some tender glance or tone of Egremont's to banish them; since, having disclosed his passion to

the lovely object who inspired it, he no longer possessed any command over his eyes or voice, when he addressed or gazed upon her; although that day he had no other opportunity afforded to him of renewing the subject nearest to his heart.

Mrs. Gore had given her interruption to the love strains of Egremont, by her coming in to perform her daily task of elaborate practice on the piano forte, harp, singing, and drawing; and during a number of hours thus dedicated to her accomplishments, her sick child was not once attended to by his mother; nor would have been even thought of by her, in the more important concern of her acquirements, had not his father brought him into the room, to introduce him to Rosabella, who saw in him a most lovely child, and highly interesting, through his delicate state of health, solely brought on by the reprehensible neglect of his mother, in leaving him wholly to the care of a very incompetent nurse.

The look that so eloquently spoke the tender pity of a feeling heart, which

Rosa beamed upon the child, when she saw how ill he appeared, and beheld the inattention of his mother to him, sent Captain Gore from the room with tears trembling in his expressive eyes; but in a few moments the anxious father returned, and took his little idol from his station by the knee of his mother,—where he was endeavouring to attract her attention from her drawing to himself, by all the wiles of infantile allurements—to walk him out upon a donkey; and Egremont, although it was agony to him to tear himself from the adored object of his affection, yet in pity accompanied his friend, whose silent grief for his cruel disappointment in domestic happiness he saw with pain, and in which he deeply sympathized.

Our heroine was still too great an invalide to undergo the fatigue of dressing a second time in one day; she had therefore made her morning toilet with the solid care, that would bear her through a whole day's wear, with the striking polish of innate purity of appearance; and Mrs.

Gore would not tear herself from her loved pursuits, to take from the slatternly aspect she wore, even to please an adoring and estimable husband; so that they separated not for this usual purpose.

The moment the Myrtle Lodge party were seated at dinner, Captain Gore inquired for the fish he had been so lucky to meet with, whilst on his excursion with his child; and which, through the late roughness of the weather there being no supply, he had considered as a prize.

The butler affecting not to know the cause of its absence, a message was dispatched to the cook to learn the reason: who sent back word, "that being not of the species fit for her master's table, she had dressed it for the Roman servants, as it was Friday."

"It has been rather unlucky for my friends," said Gore, "that my cook's opinion and mine did not exactly coalesce upon this subject; but we must endeavour to dine to-day without that, which *Madame Cuisinière* has devoted to those considered our superiors."

However, it was no easy matter to form a dinner out of that which was provided, without any respect to the economy of the table, or that the elegance of arrangement could sanction; all cooked unenticingly, and as cold, as if all had been served up before at the various tables of the household.

"I thought, Honour, my love," said Gore mournfully, "that, after our very comfortless meals yesterday and Wednesday, you said you would attend to the arrangement of your table yourself, to prevent your feeling shame at heading it."

"Why so I fully intended, Horace: but really I had not time; for was my day a thousand hours long, I still should find delightful employment for them; such are the treasures of mental acquisition!"

"Must I find time for it, Honour?" demanded Gore seriously. "Must I trespass upon your department, and enter upon an employment, which, although characteristic in the mistress of a family, is

unbecoming the pursuit of a man? Must I attend to the regulation of my table, or see my guests starved at it before my eyes?"

The moment the dessert was laid upon the table, Mrs. Gore gave orders for her child being brought to her, when she learned, that, fatigued with his ride, he had fallen into a profound sleep.

"Desire nurse to awake him," said Mrs. Gore.

"Awake him!" exclaimed Gore in a tone of dismay. "You cannot surely mean to have our poor delicate babe awakened from a sleep, that must prove so beneficial to him after his little excursion?"

"Indeed I do mean it. Why it is the only period in the whole day, that I can in possibility take from my studies, to dedicate to him; and I think it would be a little hard, if I was not to be indulged with fondling my own child one poor hour in the twenty-four."

"It would indeed," said Gore in a tone of asperity, ungenial to his nature; and

which made Egremont and Rosa tremble, as the harbinger of more asperities. "It would be peculiarly hard, to deprive him of the only hour in a long day, which his mother can sacrifice to him from the pursuit of showy accomplishments; was he not in the arms of a kinder mother—sleep."

"But he shall not be allowed to sleep at this unseasonable hour in future," said Mrs. Gore, "for I will have him in with the dessert; since it was always the plan my mother and I adopted for seeing him every day, without breaking in upon our important pursuits."

"Oh! my poor Nelson!" exclaimed Gore, trembling with painful emotion; "what would have been the agony of my feelings, whilst tossed on the fickle element, I hardly earned increase of wealth for my family upon, could I have conceived, that any pursuit would have proved more important to my wife, than the tender care of my child!"

"Why, you scurrilous animal!" said Mrs. Gore, with one of the most ineffably sweet smiles of her enchanting beauty,

" why you are growing absolutely as cross a husband as the famous Xantippe was to patient Grizzle."

" As the d—l was to the d—l," exclaimed Gore, starting from his seat, and flying to a window, which he opened with precipitance; and then closing it with equal rapidity, returned to his seat, and drank off a bumper of wine.

" What was that wild flight for, pray?" demanded Mrs. Gore, still smiling in total unconsciousness, that her rash and absurd pretensions were the cause. " Was it, pray, to turn me from chiding you, as the most unjust accuser upon earth? Impeaching me, truly, for neglecting your child, when I drew a full length portrait of him, which obtained the applause of millions at the Royal Academy in London, where it was exhibited last year? And did I not, sir, make a most beautiful song upon him?—at least my mother's elegant muse supplied the poetry, which I set to music, and published it, even with my name to it; and is there a mother in the United Kingdom who has not purchased it, and shed

tears at its tender pathos? And what more, I should be mighty glad to know, could I have done to evince maternal affection?—Oh! and I forgot too, that I have been collecting, with the greatest care, books from every juvenile library far and near, to suit the gradations of his capacity in its progressive expansion; and what more could I possibly do, Sir?"

"My dear Honour," returned Gore, almost subdued from his anger, his regrets, his but narrowly escaped disgusts, by the charms of beauty she displayed in the variations of her countenance, whilst she was speaking,—"affectionately attend to the health of your child, ere you make collections for the cultivation of his mind; and I shall be fully satisfied with your performance of a mother's part."

When the inmates of Myrtle Lodge assembled in the drawing-room for the evening, that which in the morning was practice for musical preeminence, was now an exhibition of talent in Mrs. Gore; who played and sung without cessation, until

after Rosabella, from the lassitude of recent indisposition, was compelled to retire for the night: an annoying continuance of display for Egremont, since to be compelled to listen for hours to his beautiful hostess, with the attention of *politesse*, and to turn over the pages of her music books for her, were a dreadful torment to him; as it drew him from his station by the side of Rosa,—deprived him of the sound of her loved accents, and retarded the progress he panted to make, and, in the fond and flattering inspirations of his ardent wishes, he believed he was effecting in her invaluable affections. And frequently, most frequently he congratulated himself, during this annoying exhibition, that the chosen of his heart was not a professor of obtrusive accomplishments.

## CHAPTER XIV.

From Rosabella's anxious wish to occasion as little trouble as possible, in this ill-regulated household, she made every exertion to attend the family breakfast; during which Mrs. Gore, in studied negligence of attire, pored over a volume of the Encyclopædia Britannica, without attempting to bear any part in the conversation of her husband and her guests; but the moment the repast terminated, Gore inviting Rosa into his library, which he had purchased with the house, to select some book for her amusement, Mrs. Gore threw down her study, and closely pursued them, for the purpose of displaying her own profound acquirements.

Although encouraged by Captain Gore and Mr. Egremont, to make her mental acquisitions known to them, our heroine's veil of modesty's concealing influence could not so readily be raised; and more

particularly, as she shrunk from betraying any real knowledge in invidious contrast to the absurd pretensions of Mrs. Gore; whom she requested to recommend some work, that was suited to the languid capacity of a scarcely convalescent invalide.

"What say you to something dramatic?" replied Mrs. Gore, who was unluckily standing near a range of classic authors, and had carelessly cast her eyes upon the lettering on the backs of the volumes. "Some one of these beautifully bound operas? But whose will you have? Virgil. Opera, Tom. Tom! O, I see! Virgil's edition of Tomson's Operas! Ay, Tomson's Operas, delightful poet! O, how often have I pored over these dear volumes with insatiate *goût!*"

"Oh, no," said Rosa, blushing for her, "I am not equal to poetry this morning, —I—I—would prefer, if you please—"

"I think," said Egremont, interrupting her, in anxiety to relieve her embarrassment, and to send Mrs. Gore from a spot so likely to lure her more deeply into a display of ignorance, annoying to her

keenly mortified husband, "I should conceive, a little gentle exercise would prove more genial to your health, Miss Frederick, than poring over any book to day! What say you to a donkey race, with Nelson?"

"An admirable project!" exclaimed the grateful, heart-wrung Gore. "Honour, will you form one of the competitors in this race, and leave your learning for a more successful pursuit, in a plain straight path of a pleasant airing?"

"Oh, I abominate plain, stupid paths, as much as I do the loss of time in odious airings," she replied; "therefore I shall pass the hours of your absence here, devouring, 'in the feast of reason,' one of these divine Operas of the immortal Tomson."

Gore now rushed out of the room with glowing cheeks, to order donkeys, he said, —when Mrs. Gore, rapidly opening the volume she was anxious to peruse, promptly perceived the untoward ignorance she had betrayed, not only to her husband, but to their guests, which led her to a precipi-

tate flight from the library, to conceal her confusion and chagrin;—a flight that was hailed with infinite rapture by Egremont, who lost not one moment in renewing his declarations of ardent and honourable attachment to the fluttered trembling Rosabella; whose only replies were brilliant blushes, until she at length timidly articulated a request, "that he would say no more to her upon the subject, until she could possibly persuade herself into a belief of all he affirmed being any thing but jest."

"What in possibility," Egremont exclaimed in amazement, "can render you such a determined sceptic in the power of your own fascinations, Miss Frederick? Can you have been reared with Lady Meliora Monson, and feel not one dawning inspiration of personal vanity?"

"I was reared with Lady Meliora Monson, Mr. Egremont; but her transcendent beauty proved my total eclipse, and extinguished every ray, that could have beamed from presumptuous vanity in me."

"Indeed," said Egremont smiling, "how dazzling her beauty must have proved, to destroy the optic faculties of all around her! But, did not even this little hand," and snatching the hand of Rosa, he held it up before her eyes; "and did not even this fair hand rise up, to avert the mighty eclipse of this total extinguisher? Did not this, beheld at the bar of judgment, proclaim beauty superior to Lady Meliora's?

Rosabella blushed in consciousness, but made no reply; for well she knew Lady Meliora had not a particularly beautiful hand; whilst her own skill in drawing had almost led her to believe, she herself possessed that one advantage over her friend.

"And really, Miss Frederick," continued Egremont, still smiling, "did your reflected image in an alluring article of furniture,—in which, it is rumoured, ladies fain do sometimes complacently contemplate what they there behold, never, never, whisper to you the possibility of

your possessing charms surpassing even Lady Meliora's own?"

"And what would have availed such ideal whispers?" replied Rosa smiling, "when all around me whispered the positive assertion, 'that the gift of beauty had been forgotten, when the assemblage of fairies were convened, by her sponsor Fay, at the birth of Rosabella.'"

"That the males of the family breathed not such assertions, I must conclude."

"Indeed you must not, if you wish to be correct," said Rosa, "since it was the constant lure of Mr. Sternham, to lead me to diligence; for his exordium to the process of my studies ever was, 'Remember, child, you have neither beauty nor riches, to turn criticism from your glaring defects, therefore you ought to endeavour at making up something of an equivalent, in all of mental stores your dearth of ability will admit of your acquiring.'"

"My adored, my every way attractive Rosa!" Egremont exclaimed, "how can I overcome this unfounded humility, so

impeding to your belief of my ardent, my unalienable attachment, which has been so strangely, so cruelly implanted in your mind?"

"Oh, do not say, 'cruelly implanted humility,' Mr. Egremont!" said the grateful Rosa; "for cruelty formed no part of my treatment at Ravenswood. As my vanity had never received incense, I felt no deprivation in its being withheld from me. And reared in the belief of my being inattractive, I was perfectly contented; and my only aim then became, not to be disagreeable, that I might be endured; and to be useful, that I might be an object, if not of affection, at least not of indifference, to those around me."

"Oh, Rosa!" exclaimed Egremont, suddenly clasping her hand in an impulse of tender affection keenly wounded for her; "how the idea could ever have been introduced into your mind, of your being an object of indifference, or of any thing but deep interest to those around you, my feelings cannot comprehend.

"But," he continued, as he submitted

to her instantly withdrawing her hand, "teach me how to convince you, that my fervent, my unalienable affections are yours. Will you believe in my sincerity, if I immediately apply, through Mr. Trench, to Lady Derville for her permission to my addressing you, to win you for my wedded pride and blessing?"

Tears of gratitude, deeply penetrated by such a generous, flattering preference, now filled the beautiful eyes of our agitated heroine; and some anxious moments elapsed, ere she could even lowly and tremulously articulate:

"That would certainly prove attachment, since only for the individual it could be awakened: as I am portionless,—without name, without connexions, alone in the world."

"But centred in yourself are all the treasures that I covet," said Egremont with tender pathos; "my name will suffice for both, my fortune will answer for both, and my connexions will be yours, dear Rosa."

Rosabella, subdued by sensations new

and uncontrollable, burst into agitation's conflicting tears, and wept as if her heart was breaking; while Egremont strove to soothe her into composure, by every tender strain that venerating love could supply; yet in vain for some moments, but at length she said—

"Indeed I cannot be composed, cannot resume my firmness, Mr. Egremont, unless you cease to hold such affecting language to me, until my now subdued spirits recover from their recent shock, with which was combined a very dire misfortune to me. But when my spirits are equal to the task, I must tell you of all the heavy clouds which hang over my destiny; when you—"

"When I shall behold no cloud to obscure your excellence:—nothing, no, nothing under Heaven to impede my ardent suit,—but what may haplessly arise from your own repugnance to me, Rosa," said the enraptured Egremont; who, from all this conflict of emotion, imbibed the flattering belief, that her heart was soften-

ing in his favour. "Therefore dear Rosa, although I cannot suspend my pursuit of you, yet you shall take your own time to recover your firmness, ere you enter on any distressing theme; as now not for ten thousand worlds would I have you dwell on that, which could have awakened such a conflict of agitation in your susceptible bosom."

"But you ought, you must, learn all of my insulation," said Rosabella; "and the moment I can rally my firmness for the undertaking, I will tell you all."

"Tell me you will be mine: that your heart whispers its softening approbation of my suit," responded Egremont, "and all other communications will be lost in my enraptured joy, unless they are such as can affect your peace."

"I think, Mr. Egremont," said Rosa, anxious to repress tears which his tenderness and generosity had taught to flow, and which her susceptible delicacy feared might be ascribed to too much interest for a man she knew so little of, "I think

I had better go and prepare for my donkey race, not to detain poor little Nelson from his airing to wait for me."

"Do so, dear Rosa," Egremont replied, perceiving her emotions were struggling once more for the subjugation of her firmness, and that his presence was therefore painful to her.

As soon as Rosa reached her chamber, she called upon every incentive to mental strength, to yield her firmness to hear the ardent love strains of the generous Egremont, without betraying so much suspicious agitation: and soon she rallied her self-possession sufficiently, to wear the aspect of a composure foreign to her bosom; for in that bosom the fascinations of Egremont were beginning to make impressions, even shadowing from her painful view the sad picture of her insulation, and to soften the poignancy of her affliction for the dire catastrophe, which had perhaps separated her from a mother's arms for ever.

At length our heroine was summoned to commence her airing, and they set out,

Gore as the attendant of his child, Egremont of Rosa, who importuned her graceful equerry to relinquish his fatiguing purpose; but vain proved her entreaties, and he proceeded by her side: a station he pronounced absolutely necessary, either to lead her steed, or to lean on the pommel of her saddle, to be in prompt readiness to aid her, should she feel alarm; as soon he found she was a most inexperienced rider. And as to him was now given the delightful pastime of teaching her to manage her spiritless palfrey, and to hang enamoured over her as his pupil, he inquired, "how it came to pass, that she had not benefitted by equestrian practice, like her friend Lady Meliora?"

"I do not exactly know," said Rosabella; "but I take for granted, Lady Derville's having had some judicious motive for preventing it."

"You would have surpassed Lady Meliora in grace," replied Egremont smiling, "and you might have captivated the young heir."

"Or, as a much more probable achieve-

ment," said Rosa smiling too, "I might have fallen from my horse and broken my neck; and to confess the humiliating truth, I believe, from all I have heard of my juvenile awkwardness and timidity, that this benevolent apprehension was the true cause of my exclusion from the equestrian school."

"I want faith," responded Egremont; "since not in possibility can you produce any evidence of awkwardness, to substantiate your testimony.—But, my beloved Miss Frederick, there seems to have been a strange plan of ungracious politics adopted at Ravenswood, that of endeavouring to throw your charms and excellence into shade: in so much, that I feel impelled to the liberty of requesting you, not to mention me in your letters to your Ravenswood friends, until after Mr. Trench arrives here, who is coming almost immediately to pass a few days with Gore.

"Believe me, Rosa, I make not this request, to impede you in the performance of any duty you think you owe to Lady

Derville, since it is for the excusable purpose of subverting the projects of Mr. Sternham to divide us. Mr. Trench has been the confident of my attachment to you, from its dawn to this moment of its meridian power; and he, deeply interested for my happiness, has been as anxious almost as myself, to promote the success of my suit with you: and when my frank avowals to Mr. Sternham met with every discouragement from him, Mr. Trench, commiserating my despair, developed that Lady Derville's intended alliance for you was all the fabrication of Mr. Sternham's inventive faculties; and this discovery led him to the conviction, of that deceiver having some sinister plan in view relative to the disposal of your hand; and led him also to advise the relinquishing every appearance of any further pursuit of you, and to desist from my intended application to Lady Derville herself upon the subject; since he is firmly of opinion, the influence Mr. Sternham has acquired over her ladyship would be all

exerted, to put a decided termination to my hopes, even before I was permitted to try my success with you.

"You, beloved Rosa, know the character of Mr. Trench too well, to suspect him of advising any thing, that could lead an innocent being like yourself from the performance of an imperative duty; and it has been his counsel, which has induced me to importune you not yet to inform Lady Derville of my suit, who, he is as firmly convinced as I am, cannot possibly have any objection, but through the machinations of her chaplain—to your union with me, except through your own negative."

Rosabella, lost in amazed conjecture of the cause, which could in possibility actuate Mr. Sternham to such enmity to her, since to a passion opposite to love she naturally ascribed his dishonourable exertions, to prevent a union so promising of happiness to her,—made no reply to Egremont; who however was too anxious for the promise he had pleaded for, not to press her to a compliance with his

entreaty; and ere this donkey airing terminated, he lured from her an assurance, that she would not mention him in her letters to Dublin, until Mr. Trench saw cause for the revocation of his interdict.

To the agreeable surprise of all the party, Mrs. Gore had dressed to appear at dinner with evident care; and although every movement betrayed a consciousness of humiliation, yet she exerted every influence of her fascinating charms, to efface from the remembrance of all, the ignorance her vain assumption of knowledge had led her in the morning to betray; now gladly condescending to avail herself of the magic of beauty, which, since she fancied herself a votary of erudition, she had affected to despise.

Mortification in the exposure of her ignorance was a new sensation to Mrs. Gore, who had been led into a dream of her own profound knowledge, by having been classed with her mother in real acquirement, by the inference of those she associated with in her mother's neighbourhood, concluding the daughter and con-

stant companion of a learned woman must also be learned; and by her mother's dexterity in warding off any impending discovery of her ignorance, she had acquired a rashness in venturing upon subjects she knew nothing of; and having, unluckily for her piracy of admiration for her mental riches, a most careless memory, she mingled arts and sciences, authors and books, ancients and moderns, in a social intercourse that had never before met; which her mother, instead of correcting, contrived to twine into new artificial garlands for her daughter's brow, by plausibly stating, "that her dear child had absolutely studied away every appearance of memory; for always soaring into the high regions of science, her thoughts were far away from passing objects, and therefore ludicrously gave words to one subject, which exclusively belonged to that which occupied her contemplation."

But although now keenly wounded by her recent mortification, Mrs. Gore had not imbibed the useful hint from it, of contenting herself with the real claims

for admiration which she eminently possessed; but had adopted the chimera, of rapidly becoming what she long had affected—a woman of learning. And, to promote this scheme, she had spent hours that morning in selecting Latin books, and turning over the leaves of them, to discover, through some exhaling influence from the letters, the most facile method of teaching herself that language; since she was determined neither to seek advice nor submit to instruction, as no one should develope her ignorance further, now she had determined on a plan for preventing the possibility of that being again the case. And, that she might commit no more errors in the nomenclature of authors and their works, she had hunted out a catalogue of learned books; and actually got off one column, as the commencement of the scrap-screen she was about to compose, to shield her ignorance from further detection.

Gore was charmed to rapture, on beholding this unusual attention in his wife to dress, since he interpreted it as arising

from her mortification in the morning arousing her from that arrogating folly her mother had encouraged. And when dinner passed without one allusion to the classics, and she had suffered him to pronounce her dress remarkably becoming, without evincing her usual contempt of personal admiration, his conviction of this eagerly panted for amendment acquired new strength: and when his child appeared with the dessert, and he beheld her gracefully performed caresses, he soared to the brightest visions of coming domestic felicity, until his aërial structure was threatened with an overthrow by one of her blundering allusions. However, he was so fascinated by the expectation of her yet constituting his domestic happiness, that, for one lapse into former habit, he would not yield up the prospect of his hoped for Paradise.

"But," continued Mrs. Gore, promptly perceiving, by the blush which mantled her husband's cheeks, that she had again committed herself, and anxious to lead to a subject in which she flattered herself she

could not err—" But you have not told me the result of your donkey race;—no further than the cheeks of Miss Frederick and Nelson proclaim its having done them an infinity of good—but, I mean, which won the plate?"

"Why, Nelson did," Gore replied, archly smiling; "for either Miss Frederick's steed, or her squire, were prodigiously lazy, allowing Nelson to get a-head of her in every tack."

"Well, I have a tack of my own to go upon now," said Mrs. Gore; "and that bright blush of Miss Frederick's, as you betrayed her having been distanced by Nelson, quite determines my going upon it. The whole party shall sit for their pictures to me; for I am convinced you will form an elegant group of gipsies, being all so beautiful."

"I fear your skill, transcendent as it is, Mrs. Gore," said Egremont, "will scarcely succeed in making a gipsy of Miss Frederick; neither eyes, hair, complexion, nor the character of the countenance, correspond with that race."

"That does not signify," replied Mrs. Gore. "She can readily be supposed not to be a genuine one, but some stolen child they attached to them; or, if she must be bronzed to render her characteristic, I can easily tan her, and give her black hair; while, as to her eyes, we may cast them down, looking at some interesting object on a lower ground."

"At Egremont, for instance, throwing a goose up to her, he has just purloined from an honest farmer, for her dinner," said Gore, archly.

"Nonsense, Horace! I will not have my project ridiculed, since I am determined upon its execution. But, I suppose, I must introduce myself as one of the group, having, as I have been told, quite a gipsy countenance. Then, Mr. Egremont's eyes and eyebrows are quite appropriate; and, as to my copper captain, he is the exact tint; so that I shall stretch my canvass to-morrow, in readiness to commence."

"And then you will stretch your genius," said Gore; "and, should you re-

quire an auxiliary in the formation of your design, you have Miss Frederick at hand to aid you, whose pencil in the art of grouping few can equal, I find; and whose exquisite taste, in forming drapery, has spread her fame throughout our province."

"And with justice," said Egremont, with animation; "since never shall I forget the exquisite taste,—so chaste, so simple, and yet so attractive, with which you formed the drapery of Lady Meliora for the jubilee."

"Why, is it possible, Mr. Egremont, that you were at the jubilee!" exclaimed Rosa, whose bright blushes at his praises were mingled with those of astonishment, at not having heard him mentioned by her friend.

"I was, indeed, there.—But why look so surprised at hearing it?"

"Because *I am* surprised that you could have been there, and Meliora not mention you in her enumeration of the assemblage."

"Her ladyship was too much attracted

by the fascinations of Mr. Henry O'Blarney, to observe so insignificant a being as I am," replied Egremont, smiling in rapture on her, as her artless surprise at his being unnoticed by her friend seemed to convey some idea of her own sentiments of him.

"Or, perhaps, Lord Montalbert," said Gore, "as I understand his lordship was there, is the possessor, I rather believe, of fascinations too; and is a d—lish good matrimonial speculation."

"I should think, by every account of the two individuals," said Rosabella, "that Lord Montalbert would be much more likely to monopolize the attention of any woman of *tact*, than Mr. O'Blarney, put matrimonial speculations out of the question; which allow me to request you will do, while we talk of Lady Meliora, whose speculations relative to any man, believe me, would be upon the chance of happiness his mental perfections might promise her; not upon his rank or riches."

"In Lord Montalbert, she might speculate upon both," said Mrs. Gore; "for,

speculate upon his chance of happiness with Lady Meliora;" and then, turning to Egremont, she inquired—

"How he came to get weary of the jubilee so soon, as not to form one of the dinner party, since she had met him at the very hour of the dinner?"

"Disappointment chased me from the gay assemblage," he replied. "The individual, whom a hope of meeting had attracted me thither to see, was absent; when my good destiny influenced my flight, to lead me where happier success attended my wishes."

The gentlemen made but a short sojourn in the dining-room, after their fair attractors left them; and, although Mrs. Gore renewed her musical exhibition, Egremont contrived to evince himself a better general than on the preceding evening; for to Gore he consigned the torturing post he then had filled.

## CHAPTER XV.

THE following morning Mrs. Gore appeared at breakfast in high beauty, and in the most attractive temper; for two hours' study in her closet had bound her firmly in the ideal fancy, that rapidly turning the leaves of her grammar over, and repeating to her high satisfaction the words she found most easy to articulate, was the sure road to the prompt and perfect attainment of a learned language.

Under the influence of this cordial comfort of anticipating vanity, Mrs. Gore commenced the sketching of her group of gipsies immediately after breakfast, and thus confined the whole party to her painting-room for several hours that morning: but as his boy was in his arms, and his wife quite an adept in the talent she was displaying, Gore was the happiest of the happy; and Egremont, thus chained to the same spot with Rosabella, could form no

wish for any other station, had he not perceived a languor in her countenance, mingled with that trait of melancholy pensiveness, the late unfortunate catastrophe of the house-wreck had settled there; and he became almost wild with anxiety for the moment of emancipation to arrive, in which he could propose some excursion to benefit her health.

At length the moment did arrive, when Mrs. Gore liberated her gipsies from their long attendance; when, instantly, Egremont proposed a donkey race between the competitors of the preceding day, which, being immediately acceded to, the anxious father took charge of his child, and the equally anxious lover again became equerry to the adored of his heart.

At this day's dinner Mrs. Gore condescended to be beautiful and pleasing; and, as she committed only one error in one learned allusion, so guarded was she become, that Gore was almost tempted to forgive the annoying part she was compelling him to take, so totally inconsistent

with the manly department, as attending to the management of his household.

On the following morning, the vanity of Mrs. Gore having reported progress in her secret study, she attended the breakfast board in high spirits; and the moment that repast was ended, she recommenced her gipsy group; but, in the course of her sketching to form the outline of her picture, not finding her fancy fertile in yielding her scenery to her wishes, she determined upon their sallying forth on donkeys in quest of a picturesque spot to portray; and this project was no sooner formed than put into execution.

Egremont was, as usual, the attentive attendant of Rosabella; and Gore took charge of his wife and child; and, in their extended ramble, so much of romantic scenery presented itself to the delighted view of the party, that Mrs. Gore found it difficult to make her selection of a scene, each new one appearing more beautiful than its predecessor. She at length determined their excursions should be re-

peated daily, until she, Rosa, with the two gentlemen, who could also sketch incomparably from nature, took all the fine views in the neighbourhood, that she then might select whichever accorded most harmoniously with her gipsy group.

And nothing could have proved more auspicious to the hopes and wishes of the deeply enamoured Egremont, than the completion of this project; since five successive days passed in wandering through woods and wilds, highlands and lowlands, over piles of rocks and broken bridges, where his aid was in constant requisition; awakening new claims upon the gratitude of Rosa, leading her to rest her sole dependence upon him in every difficulty; and erasing from her recollection, by this constant employment in her service, how recently their acquaintance had commenced. All combined as passes to a heart before inclined to yield its tender affection to his fascination, which never had been drawn more strikingly to her view, than whilst giving zest by the charms of his animated conversation, and his assist-

ance with dignified grace, yet easy obliging good humor, to their repasts, which they themselves spread out beneath some luxuriant tree, in the style of that race in the resemblance of which Mrs. Gore was toiling to perpetuate them.

On their return to Myrtle Lodge from the last of these delightful rambles, our party found Mr. Trench had arrived during their absence, and by no means sorry to partake of that tea with them, they had all been anxiously wishing for during the last mile of their march homewards.

In compliment to Mr. Trench, the conversation of this evening was a more general one, than Mrs. Gore's monopoly of attention to her musical exhibition had allowed any to be since Rosa had become an inmate at Myrtle Lodge; and as Egremont shone forth conspicuously in it, she found new causes for her admiration, whilst she, drawn out by the dexterous management of Mr. Trench to display to Mrs. Gore the attractions of feminine information, combined with winning unassuming modesty, timidly betraying its

mental treasures. Egremont, on his part, felt more causes for fascinated approbation thrilling through his bosom; and on such enchanting wings had the evening glided by to almost every individual of the party, that with surprise the unwelcome hour of parting arrived; and consolation was only to be sought for from the hope of such time-beguiling companions often meeting, to renew their witching magic.

When in her chamber, poor Rosabella had to bewail her disappointment in no letter to her from Dublin having yet arrived; but soon Betty contrived to turn her thoughts from the pangs of wounded friendship and affection, by exclaiming, in the most doleful part of our heroine's lamentation, for the silence of her long cherishing friends—

"Miss Rosa! sure yourself isn't fretting about the silence of any one, when its capering in the Moon you ought to be for getting such a husband as Mr. Egremont; who is a hero in the king's brave army to boot, while 'tis an elegant property he must to a certainty be having,

any how, and long life to him! for his heart must be as beautiful as your own, dear; and that was what made it take so kindly to you, through sympathy.

"And so, Miss Rosa, myself finds out this elegant property; bekease I am always so cute, when things fals in my way: and upon going to see Mrs. Kilbride today, I found her stark mad with joy; and well she might, for what had Captain Egremont done, and success to him! but sent his old sarvant-boy Steel, to desire her to move, as soon as her sickness will let her, to her own deserted tenement; which he will furnish at his own expense, as a lodging-house for her livelihood; and to promise, that he will employ an honest lawyer;—but where will he get one, jewel? —to secure the property from Kilbride, the rap of the world!—And more nor that, Miss Rosa, but his noble heart has led him to promise, to make up to poor O'Flanagan the losses he has sustained."

On the subsequent morning, Mrs. Gore was early in the field, for demand upon the admiration, the talent she exhibited

in her painting-room could absolutely claim; and although Mr. Trench did not form one of the group to be handed down to posterity by the pencil of the lovely artist, he attended the party to the easel, to aid the general cheerfulness by his ever instructive or entertaining conversation.

At length, however, Rosabella having sat her time to the fair artist, Egremont was the next object for portraiture; and Mr. Trench, remarking she looked languid, requested her to walk with him upon the lawn.

Instantly and gratefully Rosa complied; and not very long had they paced their way together, when her reverend companion inquired—"If she could form any idea of the cause, that influenced Mr. Sternham's endeavour to prevent her union with Mr. Egremont?

"He strangely misrepresented him, I find, to you and Lady Derville," said Mr. Trench. "May I ask you to confide in me the particulars of his defamation?"

Rosabella, although infinitely embarrassed, yet believing she might fully trust

to the discretion of Mr. Trench for no evil consequence arising from her unreserved communication, complied with his request; when nothing could surpass his astonishment at her recital, but his indignation at a man of sacred function disgracing his profession, by concurring and giving utterance to such malevolent falsehoods.

"And all so open to prompt detection," continued Mr. Trench; "since nothing but the seclusion you have lived in, with your removal hither, could have veiled his calumnies from immediate detection. However, nothing of Mr. Sternham's inexplicable discouragements could find influence over the devoted lover, in leading him to relinquish his pursuit of you.

"But, my dear Miss Frederick, as you have received a character so completely to depreciate poor Egremont in your favour from one divine, another must strive to counteract the poisons contained in that malevolent misrepresentation; and therefore, on my sacred word,—on the power which an intimate knowledge of his mind

and disposition, through being his preceptor, has afforded me, I can to a positive certainty assure you, that a man more sound in religious principles, in honor, integrity of heart, or more perfect in every excellence, is not to be found upon earth than he is:—and from knowing him so well, loving him parentally, you cannot wonder that his happiness should deeply interest me; and as a measure I feel conviction will insure to him the blessing of domestic felicity, I own his union with you is the earnest wish of my heart.

"You doubtlessly wonder, my dear Miss Frederick, how I, who never had the happiness of interchanging even a passing civility with you, until a few days since, should feel so thorough a conviction of your excellence: but you know, I was a parent,—blessed in a child.—I had a son, and when I lost him, you lost a zealous, an admiring friend.—You—you remember Augustus, Miss Frederick."

"Oh! Sir, could any one who ever knew—forget him?" responded Rosabella, in a tone that subdued at once the parent's

firmness. Mr. Trench burst into tears; and so did our heroine, who wept in sympathy with the father, and in regret for the son.

At length, the submissive piety of Mr. Trench, exerting its influence, subdued his tears; and after a little struggle for an unfaltering articulation, he proceeded.

"Augustus was my only child; and when it was the will of Heaven to bereave me of his estimable mother, he became my only treasure; and a rich one he was; for in heart and mind, in virtues and talents, what stores were in him combined! —He was my pride, and my consolation— his bright excellence poured pure balm into my wounded spirit, and—but it was the will of Heaven to take him to his more appropriate station; and although the pang that rent him from me was a dire one—I trust, I have borne it as I ought.

"Although my boy was some years junior to my pupil, yet, from kindred hearts and minds, the strongest attachment sprung up between them; and each, I believe, participated in every thought of the other.

My excellent pupil, therefore, was no stranger to the dawn and progress of my child's juvenile passion for you; and believed with me, it would become an unalienable one: and with me rejoiced in the prospect of our dear Augustus meeting a heart and mind congenial to his own.

"I perceive, by your start of surprise, and the emotions of sensibility, which a countenance eloquent in expression portrays, that the attachment of my child to you, Miss Frederick, was unsuspected by you:—but it was strong and tender.

"Perhaps you may not remember,—but I do—for all that concerned him has found his father's memory a retentive one—that your first interview was in the cabin of a man, who was dying of a pulmonary complaint.—Augustus was there to give his ever ready pity's-gift, when you arrived with an offering from your own privation.—You came with a small quantity of choice fruit, your daily present; and the kindness, that marked your gentle compassionating manner to the suffering man, arrested the attention of my boy,

and fixed his admiration; which was not likely to find diminution, when from a domestic of ours, whose sister was in the nursery at Ravenswood, he learned, 'that offering of humanity was your own allotted portion for the day, from which you resolutely abstained to benefit a suffering fellow-being.'

"Such an instance of compassion and forbearance in a child so young—for you could not have been more than ten years old, Miss Frederick—was not likely to fail in its impression upon the heart of Augustus; nor did it fail in effect upon any heart in my parsonage; for it stamped upon mine a full conviction of what excellence was enshrined in the budding blossoms of innocence and beauty; and I have no doubt, laid the foundation in the heart of my pupil of that passion, which is now in its full glow for you; as Egremont was then on a visit with me. Having taken his degree most honorably to himself in the College of Dublin, and just entered the army, he was at St. Leonard's to bid me a long farewell; and therefore, all

that Augustus thought of you, and gleaned from the before-mentioned servant of your transcendent goodness, was imparted to him; and ere the departure of my beloved pupil, he revealed his hopes to me, that in this lovely child of promise, under Lady Derville's guardianship, Augustus had found his future blessing.

"An introduction for me, and my poor boy, at Ravenswood, was incompatible with the strange abhorrence Mr. Sternham has ever borne to me;—however, most unexpectedly, Augustus at length met you at the Bishop of ——'s; and after a residence of two months beneath the same roof with you, he returned to me with the most tender affection of his heart riveted on you; and when you came back to Ravenswood, not a day elapsed wherein the youthful lover did not hear some affecting tale from the lip of gratitude, of the pitying kindness of the young votary of benevolence, who was enshrined within his heart.

"During all this time, Augustus carried on a regular correspondence with Egre-

mont, and all my boy was enchanted by at the Bishop of ——'s, with every *trait* of benevolence he subsequently discovered, was promptly delineated to his friend.

"But at length, my dear young friend, —for may I not call *friend* her whom I had fondly hoped one day to call my daughter?—my hopes were blasted, and my heart was rent; for all that gilded life for me was wrested from me; and all that was left me was, to prepare for my summons to a better world.

"You now see, my dear Miss Frederick," Mr. Trench at length continued, resolutely conquering his rising tears, and struggling for composure; "that I am interested by no common causes for you; and that no common interest impels my anxiety for your union with a man, whom I know:—can my child look down from his state of bliss upon us, he will smile his approbation, as a being formed to make you happy:—for it seemed, as if Augustus had cherished a wish for this union taking place; since the last lines he ever wrote were addressed to his friend, recommend-

ing him strongly never to enter into any matrimonial engagement, until he had become acquainted with Rosabella Frederick; to learn from observation of her, what a woman ought to be to form the connubial happiness of a man of sense, of religion, and of feeling.

"Of this letter I knew nothing until a few months since, when Egremont returned from the Peninsula, covered with laurels; but with health so impaired, that his native air it was believed could alone restore it; and I, alas! thought I was fated to lose another child in him.

"In our frequent confidential conversations, he at length informed me of this letter; which with former accounts, and unceasing beautiful anecdotes of your goodness, awakened interest almost painful in his bosom for you, whom he had never then beheld.

"Very shortly after, his importunate curiosity was gratified; he obtained a view unobserved by her he eagerly contemplated.—Of all that view awakened you

are now fully aware; but ere he gave reins to his passion, or sought by every stratagem again and again to behold you, he informed me of all that was arising in his heart, springing up on the basis admiration for your mental excellence long had reared; and entreated me to tell him candidly, should he seek the reciprocation of his passion, and should Rosabella be doomed ultimately to prove his wedded blessing, whether it would augment the pangs of my parentally wounded heart?

"Promptly and sincerely I assured him, that it would prove balm to my wounds; for that to see his health reinstated, his happiness insured, was all that was left me to wish for here; or that could gild my declining years with beams of joy.

"From that moment of my solemn assurances, he has been your invisible shadow; never appearing to you in the stations he concealed himself in for his admiring observations, lest he should alarm or offend you; until at length, terror at the danger his anxiety portrayed you in

led him to the intention of presenting himself before you; when through his fall humanity led you to seek him.

"You already know, my dear young friend, the subterfuge of Mr. Sternham, to turn your lover from his pursuit of you; and that we discovered he was deceiving Egremont, to prevent his introduction at Ravenswood: and in consequence of this, we considered it no breach of moral or honorable law to subvert his projects, whatever they might spring from, if we could.—Your immediate removal to Myrtle's Town, with my nephew coming so opportunely to reside here, proved auspicious auxiliaries to our plans; and sincerely I trust, will turn out auspicious also to your mutual happiness.—The attachment of Egremont to you is fixed—is unalienable; and I hope now you know his worth from unquestionable testimony, that he may not be doomed to the misery of finding your heart insensible to his merits."

"Indeed, I should think, Sir," returned Rosa—who had proved far from an in-

sensate auditress of the parent's recital relative to his son; now blushing in conscious bashfulness upon thus being called upon by the expecting pause of Mr. Trench for a reply:—"I should think, Sir, it were scarcely possible for Mr. Egremont ultimately to prove an unsuccessful wooer to any woman with a disengaged heart.—But, as to myself, I cannot feel comfortable in his addressing me, without the sanction of my beloved protectress.—I feel, as if I was reprehensibly entering upon a clandestine measure; as if disregarding the influence of gratitude's best principles; and these feelings, believe me, Sir, must impede the progress of Mr. Egremont in my affections."

"But let them not, I beseech you, most praiseworthy Rosabella!" exclaimed Mr. Trench, taking her hand with approbation's energy; "Let nothing impede his progress in your affections, since the clandestine appearances we have assumed are only to be continued, believe me, until your lover's hopes are raised to a security, that may defy the misrepresentations of

Mr. Sternham; until in your gentle bosom may be found an influence, to lead you to subvert or disregard the machinations of malevolence: then, my dear young friend, should this happy vision be realised to Egremont,—I am to be the willing delegate, sent with the proposals of an unexceptionably honorable man, to your kind protectress for you. All this we have arranged; but until assured we have your wishes for our success in the important negotiation, why should we subject ourselves to the ungracious repulses of the savage man, who seems to govern Lady Derville? or by laying before him our hopes and wishes, yield him the prompt power to circumvent them?'"

At this moment Egremont, liberated from his station in the painting-room, made his appearance to the brightly visible suffusion of Rosabella's glowing cheeks, and the perceptible perturbation of her bosom: nor were these visible symptoms of agitation decreased, when Egremont flew to her, took her hand with a gentle

pressure, and drew it through his arm declaring:—

"He must seize perforce the honour of supporting her in her walk; since she looked fatigued."

"Quite pale with that fatigue," said Mr. Trench smiling.

"Flushed, you mean, dear Sir," exclaimed Egremont in alarm, wholly unconscious of what his presence had effected.—"Rosa, dear Rosa, speak—tell to me, are you really much subdued by your walk?"

"No, not in the least, indeed Mr. Egremont—unless Mr. Trench is; and then, I had rather—a great deal,—infinitely, return to the painting-room to rest;" Rosa hesitatingly replied.

"No, no," said Mr. Trench, "you need not return to the painting-room, for any purpose visible, at least; and as you have confessed yourself so robust, as to be still unwearied from the toil of walking, I shall leave you to the care of this young gentleman; who never thought of offering

his supporting arm to poor subdued me; who now, in dudgeon with him for this unnatural inattention, will take myself off to a family conference within; and leave him to the punishment of witching wiles and magic charms."

"Not without me, Sir," Rosa exclaimed, attempting to follow him; but Egremont with tender force detained her, and soon by the persuasive eloquence of love, led her unresistingly to prolong her walk with him, until his own apprehensions for her induced him to terminate their interesting promenade, lest she should suffer through fatigue.

## CHAPTER XVI.

A WEEK now glided by at Myrtle Lodge without the occurrence of any incident worthy of record; except that the progress of Egremont in the affection of Rosabella was such, that ere it arrived at its termination, he won permission from her to make his application to Lady Derville, as soon as her receipt of a letter from Dublin permitted her addressing her ladyship upon the subject; as from herself she thought the first intimation of so important a circumstance ought to come. But keenly wounded by the continued silence of Lady Meliora, after her melancholy detail of her providential escape from a watery grave, and of the dire destruction to all her hopes from the communications of Antonia; she felt an indignant glow mingled with her pained affection, which forbade her entering upon any confidential subject, until this unkind

as inexplicable silence should terminate; for she felt conviction, that it was not caused by the illness of any of her absent friends, since in that event she would have been sent for express to perform the part of principal nurse; as, whoever had been ill for the last three years at Ravenswood, that was the post which she had constantly filled.

Upon the last evening of this event*less* week, a letter arrived from Lady Derville herself to our heroine; but so frigid, —so formal,—so heartless, it overwhelmed poor Rosabella with the most severe affliction of wounded sensibility and affection; for in it was a chilling condolence upon her late alarm, and termination to her hopes of a reunion with her family; with advice couched more in the form of a command, for her immediately proceeding to Mrs. Deborah Sternham, at Pippin Grove, under the safe escort of Mr. Sternham, who would arrive at Myrtle's Town for that kind purpose, in a very few hours after the receipt of her ladyship's intimation of his friendly intention.

This letter, so torturing to the susceptibilities of Rosa's affectionate and grateful heart, which she received when she retired for the night, chased sleep from her pillow. Many a tear she shed at conduct so new, so strange, in her hitherto most kind and maternal benefactress; and no small degree of alarm she experienced at the idea of Mr. Sternham's visit to Myrtle's Town; since she doubted not, but his displeasure on finding her an inmate of the same dwelling with a man, whom he had so inexplicably misrepresented, would lead him to the adoption of new malevolence, to effect her separation from Egremont for ever.

Egremont knew nothing of the arrival of this unwelcome letter, until the subsequent morning, when, upon his eager scrutiny of the countenance of his beloved, he developed her mental disquietude; and the moment they were left to a *tête à tête* after the termination of breakfast, by the magic of that influence he had acquired over her mind, he lured from her the full cause of her evident distress.

The sympathy awakened in the bosom of the adoring Egremont for the wounded susceptibilities of his beloved Rosa, was rapidly superseded by the most indignant glow of resentment, at her being offered no option relative to her visit at Pippin Grove, and at the presumption of Mr. Sternham's coming to perform her escort, ere it was known whether she chose to accompany him or not. Whilst he was giving utterance to the effervescence of his displeasure, Mr. Trench entered the room; but, on perceiving whose *tête à tête* he had inadvertently interrupted, was hastily retreating, when Egremont requested him to stay; and in a tone of *hauteur* electrifying to our heroine, who had only seen him as the gentle obsequious lover, he informed his friend of the unceremonious conduct adopted towards Miss Frederick.

"My dear Sir," he then continued, with cheeks flushed by indignation, "can I suffer my Rosa to be thus insulted by having others presume to determine for her? Shall I permit her to be degraded

by the insolence of a miscreant, who dared to defame the purity of her intentions, appearing here to claim the honour of escorting her to that solitary confinement Lady Derville has obligingly sentenced her to? Oh! no, no, and therefore I call upon your professional aid, dear Sir, to give her, without delay, that consequence in the world her virtues so justly merit. And you, Rosabella, I implore you not to withhold your assent to investing me instantly with a husband's right to protect you from every insult; to turn from your gentle susceptible bosom every shaft, that could aim at wounding it through unkindness and neglect."

"My dear ardent friend," Mr. Trench replied, "you forget, in your natural solicitude to shield this most amiable young creature from insult and unkindness, that she is under age; and without the consent of her guardian, my profession cannot aid you."

"I know, Sir, she is a minor, and all consequent impediments," responded Egremont impatiently, "but Scotland is not at

an immeasurable distance. I wish you to accompany our immediate expedition thither, and through your presence to sustain my Rosa by your sanction to the measure, and to tie that sacred knot, that will bind us mutually, I trust, to happiness in each other."

"I am ready, at your command," said Mr. Trench, "and absolutely think it will be the most judicious measure you can adopt, for at once terminating the inexplicable projects of Mr. Sternham."

"Oh! Sir, Mr. Trench! Mr. Egremont!" exclaimed Rosabella, almost unable to articulate from the bounding of her fluttering heart, and trembling from varied emotion, "I cannot, indeed I cannot give my assent to this hasty measure. —I never never can become a wife, without asking, at least, the concurrence of my benefactress."

"But, my Rosa, my own adored, inestimable Rosa," said Egremont, in a tone of melting tenderness, taking her hand, as he seated himself by her, "has she not forfeited her claim to this attentive

duty from you by her present unkindness, her most unfeeling conduct,—nay, I may call it her cruel and insulting conduct?"

"Oh! no, no, no," said Rosabella, with animated fervour; "Lady Derville has not forfeited her claim,—can never forfeit her claims upon my gratitude, let her be led to whatsoever unkindness she may by the influence of my implacable enemy Mr. Sternham. But, you know not, Mr. Egremont, the nature of my obligations to Lady Derville; you never would allow me to tell you of them; then listen to me now, and, in the presence of Mr. Trench, learn all I owe to her; and then I feel conviction you both will concur in pronouncing, I cannot become a wife without her approbation.

"You believe, like the rest of our neighbourhood, that I am the ward of Lady Derville, left to her care by my parents, when they embarked for the continent, where they have been since detained by the calamities of Europe, through the tyrannic power of the usurping ruler over all destinies. But I have more than once

intimated to you my insulation; though in your kind anxiety to spare me a distressing recital of past calamities, you would not hear me, Mr. Egremont: and although to you I was grateful for that consideration, as well as for other things of even more importance; yet, I must not suffer you to monopolize *all* my gratitude."

Rosabella, now no longer opposed by Egremont, proceeded to detail the history of her own hapless alienation from her mother, her kindred, her total ignorance of her paternal name.

The interest of the adoring Egremont was intense from the commencement of her brief narrative of her infant derelict-tion; but as she proceeded to state the cause of the Spaniard's cruelty, through the inspirations of jealousy on finding her hapless mother weeping over the portrait and hair of her first husband, his interest became tinctured by some evidently painful sensations; as she proceeded, his sympathizing and attentive preceptor beheld horror and despair diffusing itself over every line of his expressive coun-

tenance; and when Rosabella came to her final close of all she yet knew of her sad history, he fell on the sofa beside her in a death resembling swoon.

The terror and distress of Rosabella neither sought nor could have effected concealment at this moment. In an agony she hung over his inanimate form, imploring Mr. Trench to restore him!—beseeching him to impart to her the cause of so dire a consequence?

"The cause I very well know," at length faltered out the terribly agitated Mr. Trench. "But do not be thus alarmed, my dear Miss Frederick. He—he has been subject to such indisposition, since his health was undermined upon the peninsula; and—and, I know it will subdue him again when he revives, as speedily he will, to see you thus agitated:—therefore, I implore you, if indeed you regard him, to fly from this spot, and send Gore, instantly send Gore, but no one else hither. —And, dear dear child of my tender interest, I beseech you to call up all your firmness:—walk—walk if it is possible a

few turns upon the terrace, to rebrace your unstrung nerves, shaken by your own affecting narrative, and this unexpected attack upon them. Indeed I would not recommend your remaining here; for it would only be to overwhelm his faculties again, was he to behold you thus agitated:" and with a tremulous grasp he caught her hand, and led her to the door.

Rosabella, now pale as the inanimate Egremont, and with a heart chilled by anticipating horror, which this precipitate hurrying her from a spot where she might have been of use powerfully awakened,—obeyed Mr. Trench in summoning Captain Gore; but then winged her way to her own apartment, where closing herself in, she sunk upon her knees, and in all the agony of heart which a dire suspicion had awakened, implored the Merciful Ruler of the universe, "to avert the dreadful calamity from her, of finding in the man she too tenderly loved that brother, whom for years she had prayed to be permitted to see, and find deserving of her affection;" and only by incessant and fervent

supplications to Heaven for fortitude, did our poor heroine preserve her almost fleeting senses from subjugation, during the long interval in which she was left to endure the conflict of her dreadful apprehensions.

At length Mrs. Gore became a candidate for admission, and entered with a bottle of sal volatile in her hand; and with a countenance in which was strongly portrayed curiosity mingled with commiseration:—instantly she clasped the trembling Rosabella to her bosom with much kindness, exclaiming as she did so—

"Oh! Miss Frederick! what on the face of the earth can have happened? Horace has just appeared to me like one possessed, importuning me to leave my studies, to seek you out and pay you every attention, that pitying humanity could dictate, for that a discovery had just been made to prevent the possibility of your union with Egremont; and to prepare you for inevitable separation."

The respiration of Rosabella now failed her, and her head sunk in unconsciousness

upon the bosom of Mrs. Gore, who preserved sufficient self-possession, to raise her in her arms upon her bed, then to open a window and apply the sal-volatile to her nose.

The suspension of Rosabella's faculties was of short duration, for promptly her eyes unclosed, sighs were unchained from her heaving bosom, and a violent burst of tears seemed to prevent the threatened bursting of her heart, and lowly and tremulously she articulated in the convulsive sobs of anguished emotion:

"Oh! dearest Madam, can you—can you tell me how he is now?

"He is recovered from his swoon: but, like you, overwhelmed with agonizing anguish," said Mrs. Gore. "But what can be the dire matter, that can induce Egremont, the adoring Egremont, to fly from you without even a parting interview; and to set off almost directly with Uncle Trench?—But when Horace told me all this, he ought to have announced to me the cause of this terrible effect, or how am

I to find out means to comfort you, how prepare you for the worst?"

"Oh, Madam!" Rosabella faintly articulated, "Heaven alone can yield me consolation if my suspicions are just; can raise my faculties to their powerfully called for animation of gratitude, on having this discovery made, ere it might be horror, despair, madness, even to glance at it:—for oh! Mrs. Gore, terrified anticipation sounds through my dismayed bosom that he is my brother."

"Your brother! your *own* brother!" reiterated Mrs. Gore, sinking overpowered with horror and amazement on a chair by the bed-side.

A mournful pause now ensued, and a thousand times Rosa wished in vain for the absence of her companion, that on her knees she might devoutly implore fortitude from the merciful yielder of all blessings; but Mrs. Gore departed not, neither did she attempt one effort at consolation, for she had allowed whatever finer feelings the heart she might once have possessed,

to rust on the unclosing hinges of inaction, whilst she had dedicated her whole time to the acquirement of showy accomplishments, and in the wild *ignis fatuus* chase of an impostor knowledge; therefore of all women, whom it could have been the fate of poor Rosabella to have had doomed for her companion in such a moment of trial, none could have proved more inadequate to a task, which ought to be most genial to a woman's mind—that of soothing sorrow, and leading the wounded heart to seek balms, where mercy's distillations drop down the assuasive influence, which, if it heals not, yields the gentle power of patience to endure.

At length a carriage rapidly driven from the stable yard to the hall door electrified poor Rosabella with a pang of anguished grief scarcely to be sustained, and instantly she started from her bed, although unconscious why she did so.—In a moment more, a lingering step along the passage, approaching her apartments, filled her with terror; her heart sickened, her faculties seemed again to threaten suspen-

sion, she could no longer stand, and sinking into a chair, she awaited the fearful expectation that Egremont now, as her brother, was come to bid her distracted farewell for ever.

A gentle, but tremulous tap called Mrs. Gore to the door, who there beholding her uncle, unhesitatingly admitted him. With a countenance blanched by dismay and pitying sympathy, and with tears scarcely amenable to control trembling in his eyes, he entered the room, and convulsively grasping the icy hand of Rosabella, in the tone of subduing emotion addressed her—

" I hope Mrs. Gore has performed, my dear Miss Frederick, the distressing part, which alas! through necessity we have been compelled to assign her, that of preparing you for the afflicting departure, even without a parting interview, which a too cruel destiny has pronounced inevitable.—You cannot believe, my most peculiarly interesting young friend, that the happiness of her, whom I once fondly hoped to call my daughter, of her, whom

but a few hours since I vainly hoped soon to behold the wife of the most beloved of all my friends, is an object of indifference to me; that I could see its dearest hopes suddenly and calamitously threatened with annihilation, without the most poignant feelings of sympathy. You must therefore be assured, I would not suffer your susceptible heart to be thus painfully assailed unnecessarily; and that arbitrary reasons of invincible power command this separation, and command it to be prompt; and for both your sakes without the torture of an adieu. And although in cruelty we are compelled to leave you, without explanations of the fatal cause that thus severs you from your great prospect of every mortal felicity, yet be assured it would yet be greater cruelty to reveal to you the source of a separation, that blasts your lover's hopes of happiness, I fear, for ever."

"Oh, Sir," softly murmured out the tortured Rosabella, in a tone of pathos that thrilled through the seat of pity in his bosom, "answer me but one question;

—yet answer it, I conjure you!—Is he—or is he not my brother?"

"No, on my sacred word, *he is not* your brother:—no, *he* is not your *brother*," responded Mr. Trench; and while in a faltering tone he repeated this assurance, tears gushed from his eyes, and precipitately rising from his seat, he fled to a distant window.

Rosabella beheld not this emotion; a sensation analogous to joy seemed to warm the chilled action of her heart, and for one moment to suspend all recollection but of the welcome sound, "*he is not* your brother."

In a few moments Mr. Trench remanded some little stock of firmness to its post, and again reseating himself, he said—

"My very dear young friend, your stores of piety will be now your greatest treasure, they will teach you fortitude to bear your present affliction, and yield you resignation to submit to the will of Him, who cannot err, should it prove his decree, that your union with my almost distracted friend is never to take place.

"From that poor friend, I have the charge of many messages to deliver to you; but all so unconnected, so unlike himself, that I scarcely know how to proceed in their delivery:—but he bid me tell you he could not write them to you, and Heaven knows he could not: for he made the attempt, and Gore and I feared it would subjugate his faculties, and consign him for weeks again to the helpless couch of insensibility, which the direful cause of your present separation has already done: but I am to tell you, that he implores you not to accompany Mr. Sternham to his sister's, never to return to the protection of Lady Derville, unless recalled to it with that tenderness and respect your excellence has claim to; since he, whilst life is spared to him, will be your guardian and protector, through the agency of Captain Gore or myself. With the Gores he now importunes you to remain,—unless, after all things, Myrtle Lodge becomes a spot of discomfort to you:—and should that be so, I importune you from myself to make St. Leonard's

Rectory your home, where you will find a *chaperon* and companion in one of the most amiable women in existence, a widowed sister of my own. But it is not in a moment of agitation like this, that you can turn your thoughts to comparative trifles;—therefore, my dear child, when you can make your decision, inform Gore of it, for I shall be far away from you; since with Egremont I am going now to Spain, in pursuit of that clew, which we, alas! fear we have found to restore you to your mother's arms."

"To Spain Sir!!—To restore me to my mother!!" Rosa wildly articulated, with senses almost chased by amazement.

"Yes, beloved of my only, my lamented child:—Yes, beloved of my dearest friend, the moment some hasty arrangements can be made, we set out upon our anxious way to Alava," said Mr. Trench, tenderly taking her hand, and drawing the agitated victim of contending conflicts of emotion, to rest her trembling temples against his paternally sympathizing bosom.

"But shall I say, most interesting Rosa,—our fondly cherished—yet I fear, alas! delusive hope is, that the clew we have in our possession may prove a deceptive one; for should it indeed lead us to your mother, then must the separation of you and Egremont for ever become inevitable.

"Rosa, dear inestimable Rosa, tremble not thus!—be not thus dismayed, for the failure of our clew bereaves you not of the chance of still finding your mother in some other individual,—when every fair and promising smile of happiness and prosperity will again await you with the man, who although adoring you, yet must fly you; and on the pinions of rapidity must I bear him from you—more speedily to terminate the tortures of suspense, which in one event lengthens the infliction of unnecessary suffering; and in the dire alternative, impedes submission to the irrevocable decrees of Heaven.

"But how I shall bear him hence, is a question that makes me tremble; since for mental agonies like his, where yet

shall I find balms? For mental wounds, which love's assuasive influence had healed, again rent open, how shall I find a cure? And how, having beheld the enchantments of Hope's regions, how can he sustain the dire, the dreary reverse of his desolated happiness? How, oh! how can he endure the anguished conviction of having, by his resistless supplications for your pity, dispelled the sunbeam of your bosom's peace?

"Yet, dear inestimable Rosa, that I may have one balm in store, to aid his own sure source of fortitude, when the present dreadful conflict in his mind can yield to balmy influence, give me power to assure him from you, that you will not present Mr. Sternham with means to effect that separation, which even your present apparently cruel destiny may not have decreed, by informing him, through Lady Derville, of the attachment formed between Egremont and you:—for should you be doomed no more to meet, it would prove unnecessary information, distressing to your sensitive feelings, and

more particularly so to have it known, when, at some future period, a more fortunate man—but no, I cannot for my poor friend's sake pursue that cruel supposition, for to him it would, I know, prove annihilation; but should a kinder fate await us in this menace to your union happily proving the phantom of error, and that Egremont in a few weeks should return to claim his wedded bliss in you, let him not be fated to find a renewal of misery through the machinations of Mr. Sternham."

Rosa's lips moved in promise, but articulation was denied her—lost in the conflict of sensations, for which the influence of fortitude could find no power; since the basis of all was uncertainty, surmise, hope, and fear.

This promise given, Mr. Trench pressed her with tender pity and affection to his bosom as he thanked her; then kissed Mrs. Gore, and in evident emotion precipitately left the room, articulating an affecting benediction on those he left behind him.

For many and many a minute after the departure of Mr. Trench, our poor Rosa sat with eyes immoveably fixed upon the door he had passed through, like the mute and motionless statue of insensibility, her senses all suspended from action by the sudden, the inexplicable blow she had received; until Mrs. Gore, all impatience for her powerful emotions upon the farewell of Mr. Trench to subside, that she might be liberated from her post of consoler, to descend and seek gratifications for her painful curiosity ere the travellers should depart, suddenly took her hand, and enquired "how she found herself?"

This abrupt question had the effect Mrs. Gore's wishes had anticipated; Rosa startled into animation, found every susceptible feeling once more upon the rack of mental anguish; but fortunately, feminine weakness could not long endure them without some visible sign of the warring conflict, and she burst into an abundant flow of tears; and although Mrs. Gore beheld how convulsive was this sorrow's

distillation, she salved the compassion of her conscience by clinging to the belief, that now she wept, all would be well, and hastily departed to seek in vain for the gratification of her curiosity.

The moment Mrs. Gore departed, Rosa lost not one moment in availing herself of the opportunity of devoutly imploring, on her knees, power to sustain the ills that had assailed her; and soon she found how impenetrable was the shield of piety; how assuasive its balms; for she at length heard the rapid roll of the carriage that bore Egremont away, most probably for ever, as a lover from her, with only an increased blanch of cheek, a quivering of her lip, and a bursting sigh that struggled with her firmness for its utterance.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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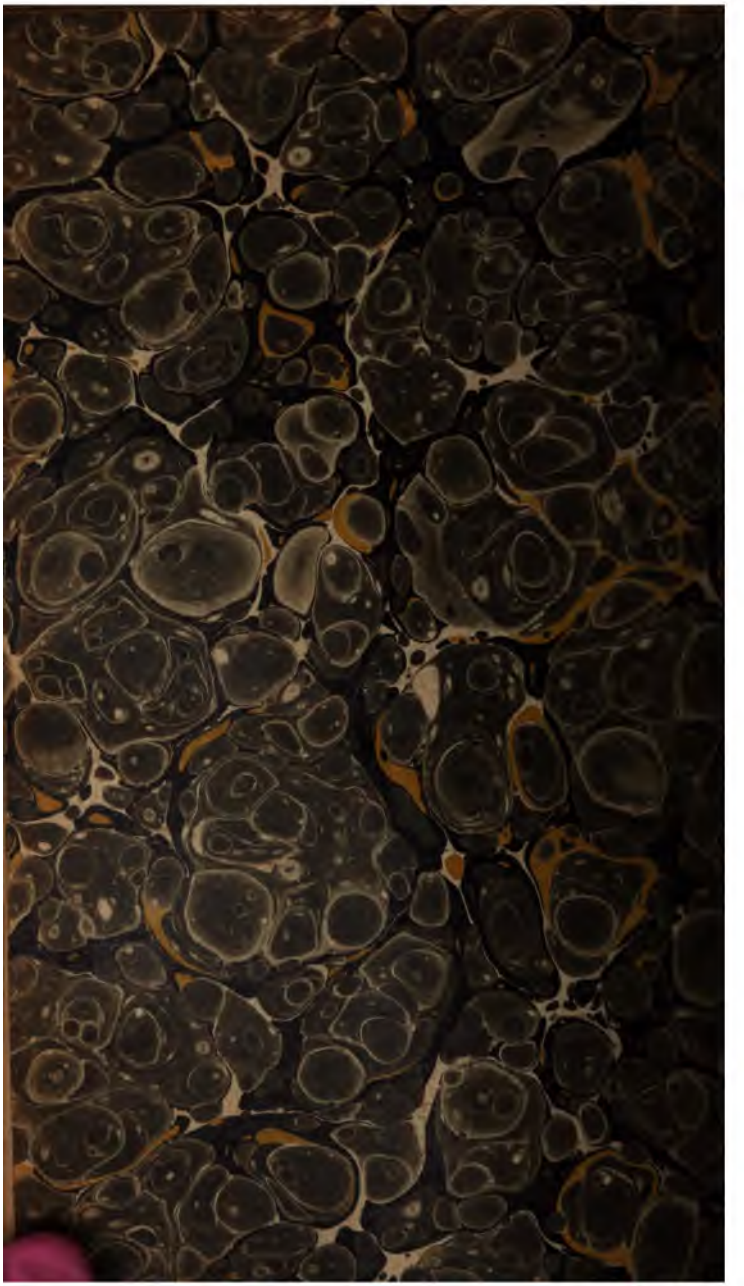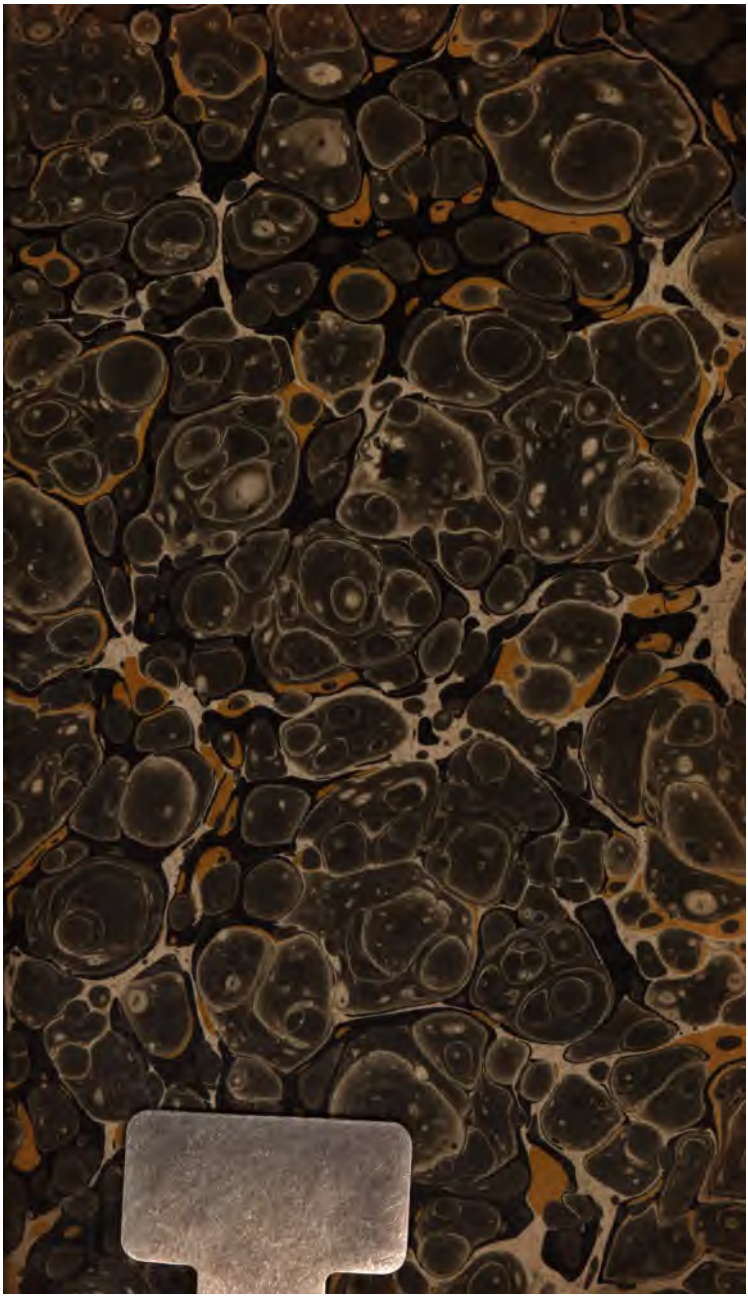
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